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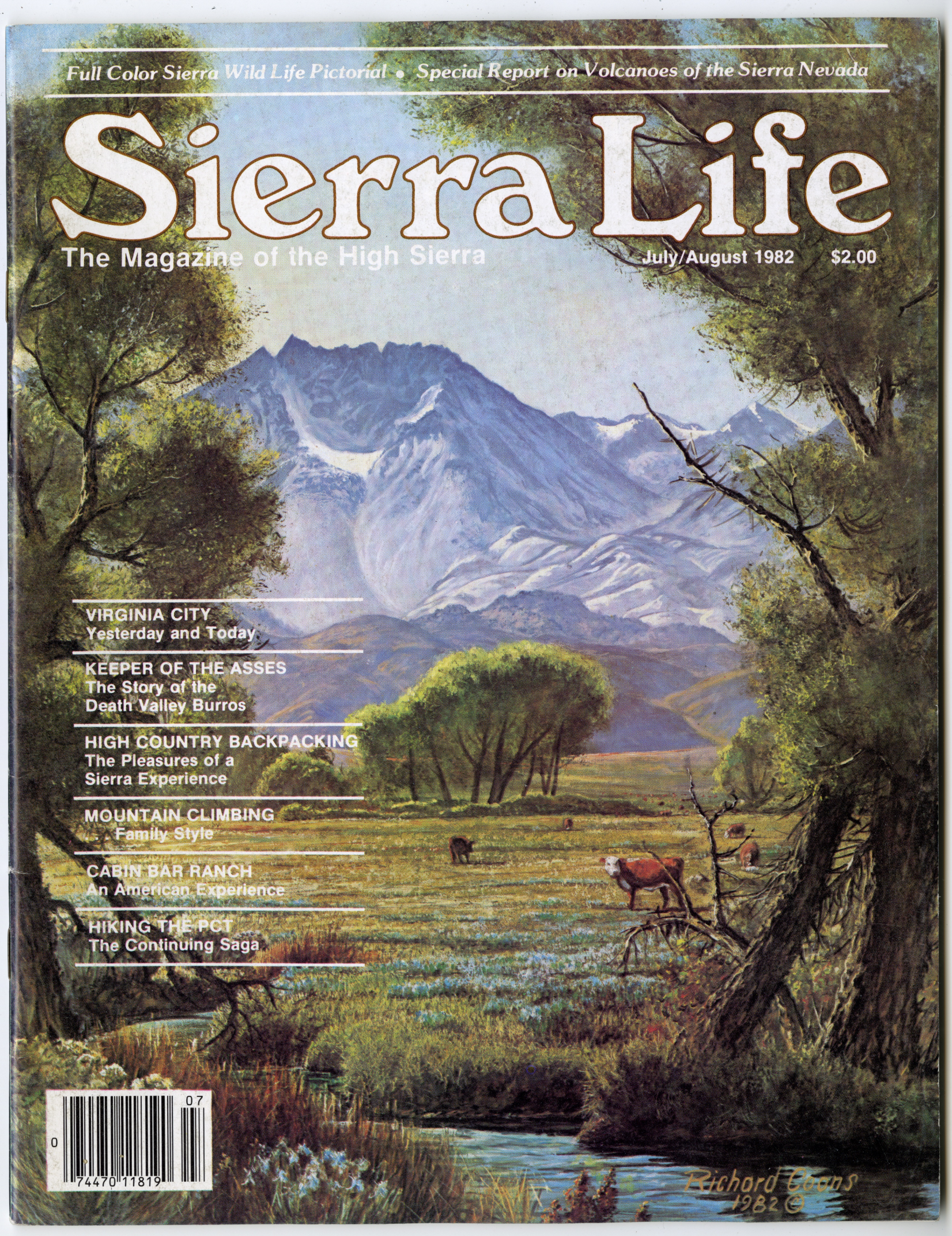
Sierra Life

The Magazine of the High Sierra

July/August 1982 $2.00



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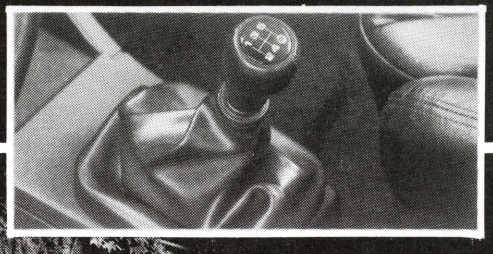

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From the Publisher . . .

It's good to be back with you again! Our readers are fantastic. We've met so many of you over the past few months when you visit the office or call to see how the weather is here in the High Sierra. We enjoy every visit and phone call. And, we appreciate the patience you've shown as we continue to work toward bringing you the most interesting, enjoyable and beautiful magazine we can produce.

In order to become more consistent, we are going to a bi-monthly schedule. We will maintain this schedule until the recession ends. All subscribers who purchased one year (monthly) subscriptions will still receive twelve issues.

There is nothing in the world like a Sierra Nevada thunder storm! We've had some good ones in the last two weeks. You determine a "good one" by how scared you are. The highest rating for a thunder storm is 10 and you only give that rating if lightning flashes and knocks out the power and the walls begin to shake immediately after the flash!

Of course, I'm not afraid of thunder storms. They don't bother me a bit. After all, it's nice and safe here under my desk with my hands over my eyes and pencil erasers stuck in my ears.

See you next time!

Sandie Pramann
Publisher

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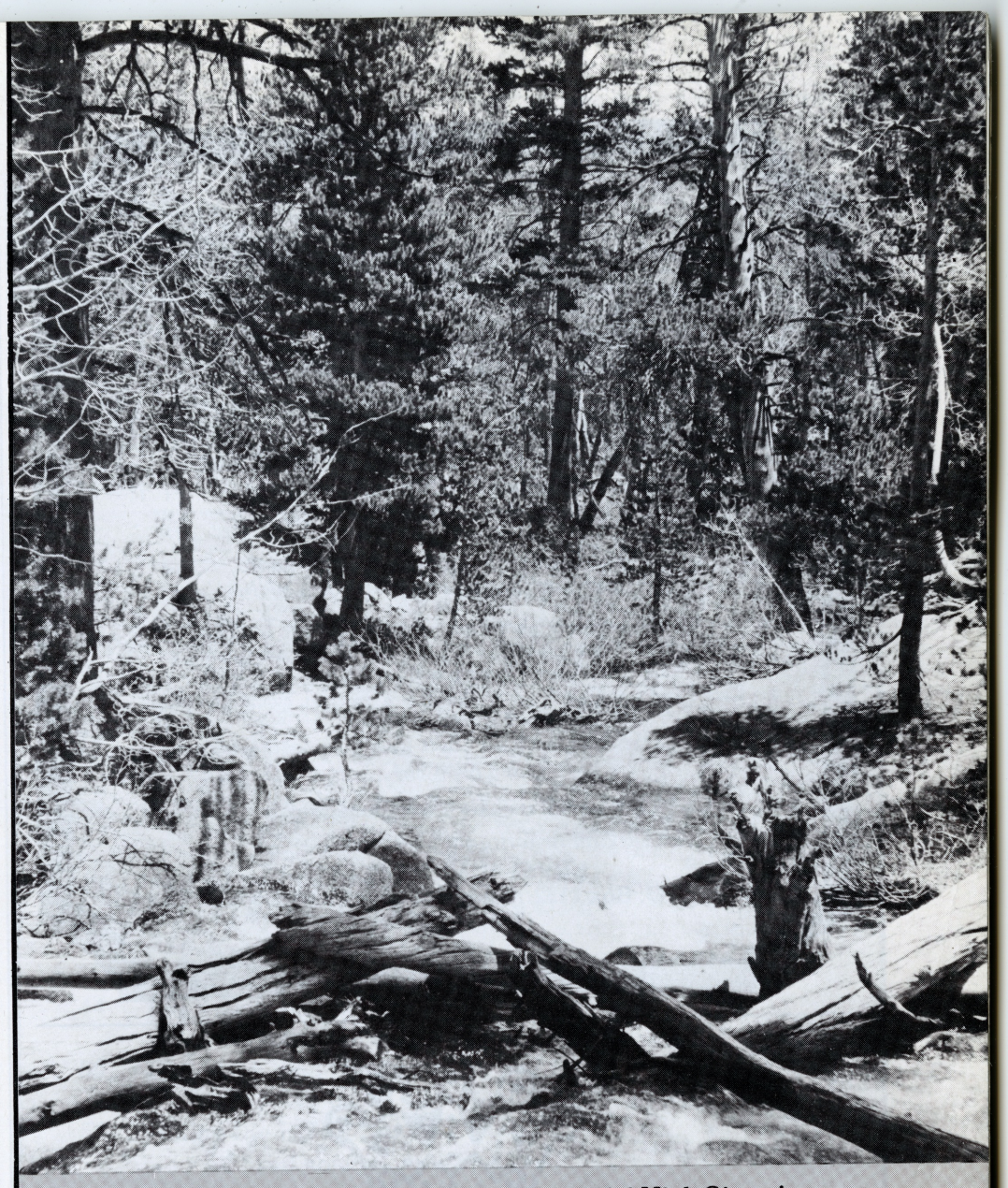

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Letters . . .

Editor:

What a beautiful magazine! . . one which will truly reflect the beauty and grandeur of the Sierras. Our compliments on the entire publication, and especially to your photographer and the printer for so faithfully reproducing those sensational color shots.

Cordially,
Ed Kemble
Santa Barbara, CA

Editor:

I think your magazine is wonderful. I wish to order four subscriptions for one year. One is for me.

Sincerely,
Ashee Noren
Big Pine, CA

Editor:

The letters to the editor (published in April) were all flattering . . . none questioned the non-arrival of their subscriptions. Is it possible I am in the minority? . . . yet the publisher's note indicates there has been a problem.

Your magazine is beautifully put together, and of highest quality, and certainly shows a great deal of work and dedication, but I'm certainly curious as to when the delays will be eliminated. . .

Sincerely,
Willa Stewart
Fresno, CA

Ed. Note: *Our subscribers have all been terrific! We have had problems in trying to start a new venture during a recession. We refuse to give up, although it has been rough at times. With a bit of luck, continued hard work and encouragement from our many readers, we* ***will*** *succeed. Without the support of our advertisers, we couldn't do it. Let them know you read Sierra Life — they deserve your support.*

Editor:

You people are putting out a beautiful magazine. A friend called my attention to it. She picked it up at Joseph's in Lone Pine. Enclosed is my check for one year's subscription.

Best Wishes,
Polly (Katherine) Connable
Independence, CA

Dear Charming Editor:

Please enter my subscription for one year on your magazine Sierra Life, beginning with issue No. 1. I am enclosing $22.00.

With love,
Joseph Porter
San Francisco, CA

OUR COVER . . .

Our cover was painted exclusively for Sierra Life Magazine by Richard Coons of Bishop.

Basin Mountain, looking west from Bishop, is shown along with the meadows and wildflowers that abound in the late spring and early summer. Bishop Creek is in the foreground.

Richard Coons' work also appears with our feature on Virginia City in this issue. Numbered prints of his outstanding painting of Virginia City are available. Please see ordering information with Virginia City article on page 8.

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Manuscripts and photographs submitted to ***Sierra Life*** should be accompanied by a self-addressed envelope with return postage affixed. The Publisher assumes no responsibility for loss or damage of unsolicited material.

Sierra Life

The Magazine of the High Sierra

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SIERRA PROFILE

A recent photo of Gus Cashbaugh.
Gus Will be 100 years old next year.

GUS
. . . SIERRA PIONEER

Up in this high valley, many a young desperado looks like a real cowboy, many a businessman is at home with his Stetson and horse, many a construction man can ride wild bulls with the best, and equestrian arts around Bishop include roping and bronc busting. There's one local hero, though, who can tell you about the original cowboys, horse-drawn chuck-wagons and one hundred years of cattle drives.

Because of his reputation as a raconteur and his charming manners, he is in great social demand. He has been honored by various organizations for his leadership, trustworthiness and community service. When Gus Cashbaugh leaves town for a few days, everyone knows, everyone nags the family about how he is and when he will be back. He lives in his own home, with his own garden, on Short Street.

Gus has a twinkling eye, a quick wit, a mind like an encyclopedia, and he will be one hundred years old next year.

Gus was born William Augustus Cashbaugh in 1883, just twenty-two years after the first settlers began to farm the fertile Owens Valley river lands, and nine years after his father arrived from Ohio to ranch on land near Bishop Creek.

"In 1870, A.A. (Andy) Cashbaugh bought 160 acres of land," Gus recounts in his family history. "There was a cabin on the ranch where Ann Connolly went to live after she married Andy. After their first child was born, Andy built a five room house. The house had a stone fireplace in one room, a cooking stove in the kitchen, a wood heater in the parlor, and a water pump on the porch. The Cashbaughs had seven children, all were born in this house."

"I'm a cattleman, you know," he says proudly. "My father started cattle in 1875 and we drove cattle out of Long Valley in 1975. My father and I drove cattle out from here for 100 years."

Gus and his brothers were allowed to join the cattle drive when they were ten or eleven years old. They rode with a pad and surcingle, carrying their own bedroll and staples, over the Coyote Hills and Bishop Pass, down to the Kings River, a route of narrow trails, slippery granite and glaciers. Later, the summer grazing grounds were changed, and the main trail from Inyo to Mono's high meadows was the historic Rickey Trail. It is now disrupted by new highways and trucking has all but ended the trail drive, where the legendary cowboy was the true authority.

As the drives became fewer, friends often hired on with horse, bedroll and gear, to join in the long, hard hours in dust and heat, or cold wind and storm. The love of outdoor life, companionship of the trail, and beauty of the mountains cancelled out all petty discomforts. Gus tells about one of those.

"It was late fall and very cold in the meadow and the men all rolled up in extra covers that night. The cook had breakfast ready by lantern light and routed out the crew before daylight. He poured out the last of the coffee and out came a dead mouse. It made us a bit sick, but the coffee was down by then and we all lived through it, never did know how the mouse got into the coffee pot."

One by one, father Andy and sons John and James passed on, leaving Gus, his son Robert, and Bud Cashbaugh, son of James, to carry on. In the early morning hours of October 27, 1975, the chuckwagon truck pulled out of the summer camp loaded with hay, two 40-gallon water cans, tents, sleeping bags, food, table, benches and gas stove, to begin the homeward trek of a centennial drive for this pioneer family. Robert and a friend rode the truck, followed by a long line of cattle driven by six experienced cowboys, some of whom were cattlemen in their own right. Three days later, the last cow through the Old Gate on Highway 6 marked, with no unusual incident, one hundred years of family tradition.

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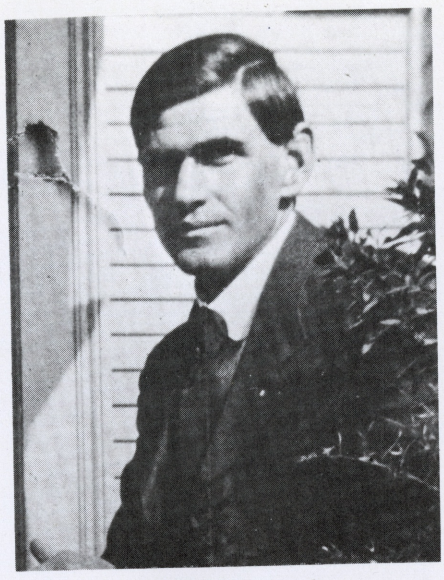
Ann Connolly Cashbaugh, Gus' mother.



Gus Cashbaugh in 1905 when he was attending Stanford.

Augustus Anthony Cashbaugh, Gus' father.

Gus *continued*

Gus went to high school in Bishop, finishing with the first class to graduate from the "Bishop Academy," and to Stanford in 1905. With his remarkable memory, he can tell you exactly what classes he took in both, and about the 1906 earthquake and fire in San Francisco when he heard what he called an awful roar, and woke up to a day he will never forget. He graduated from Stanford in 1910 with a degree in mining engineering, worked as a surveyor at Silver Peak, and came back to Bishop in 1912 when his brother John was killed.

"My brother, who was going to law school, and I decided to take over the property. So then I got to be a farmer," he tells in his droll way. He is a member of the National Cattlemen's Association, California Cattlemen's

continued on page 58

An early cattle drive. Cattle were driven into the high country each spring and back down Sherwin Grade, north of Bishop, to the Owens Valley in the fall.

Lace Curtains in a Washoe Zephyr

Virginia City, Nevada . . . "when you finally reach this town that hides on top of the mountains there is a sense of solitude that gives the feeling of being just as far from civilization as were the prospectors of the 1850's."

by Valerie J. Naso

Virginia City on a winter evening. It is cold. Lights come on, glowing softly in the parlors of gingerbread houses that cling to steep terraced hillsides. Shades aren't pulled and the furnishings glimpsed are in keeping with the homes, carved wood, gold mirrors and chimneyed lamps. Virginia City was the most elegant boisterous capital of conspicuous consumption in the history of Nevada. It is no longer isolated, but when you finally reach this town that hides on top of the mountains there is a sense of solitude that gives the feeling of being just as far from civilization as were the propectors of the 1850's.

One of the early propectors was James Fenemore (history sometimes calls him Finney), a man of dubious energy who was fond of hunting and "forty rod whiskey." It was said that after enough of this a man could stagger but forty rods before falling down. He was from Virginia and was known in the camp at Gold Canyon as "Old Virginia." In February of 1858, he

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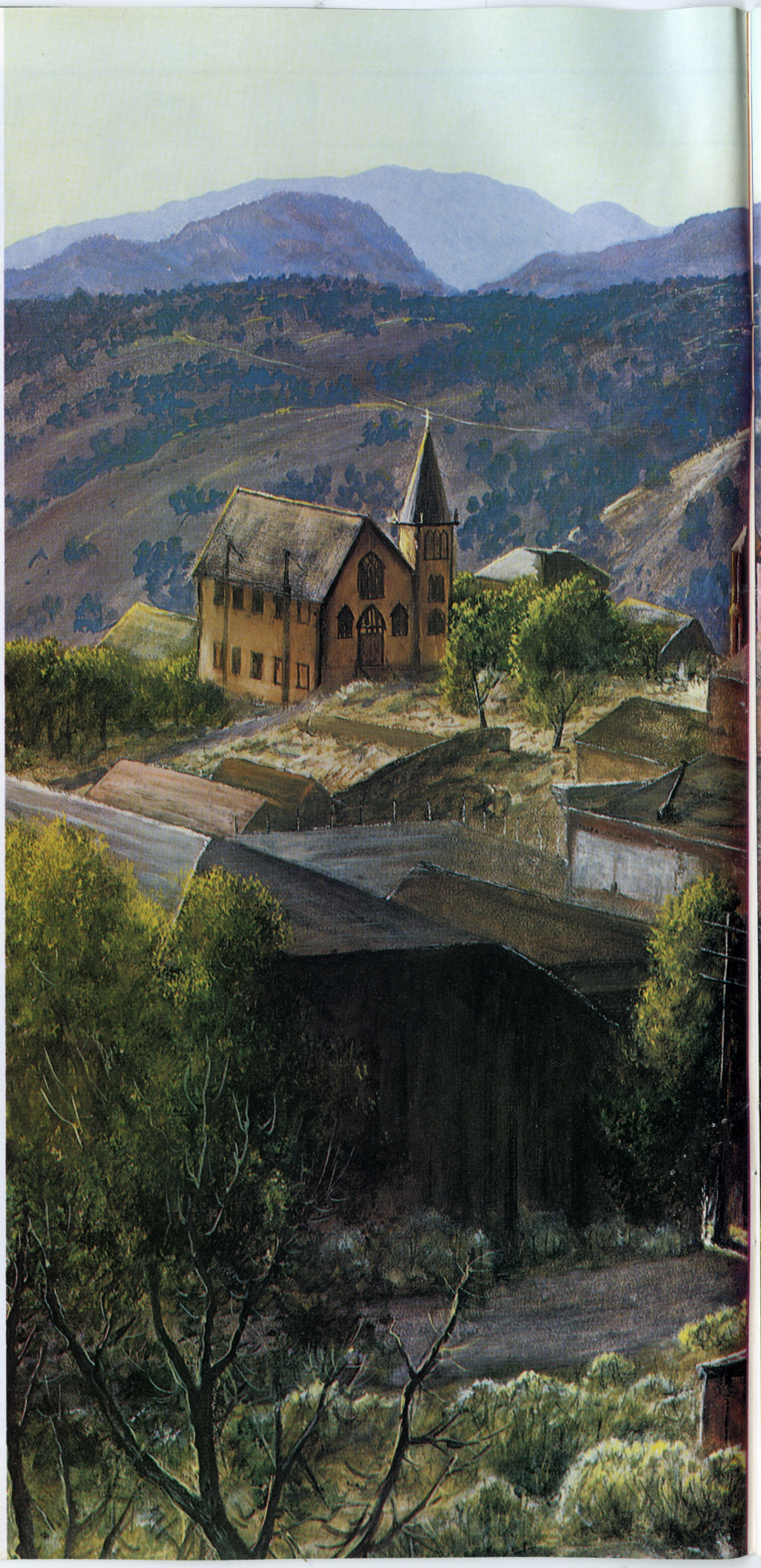
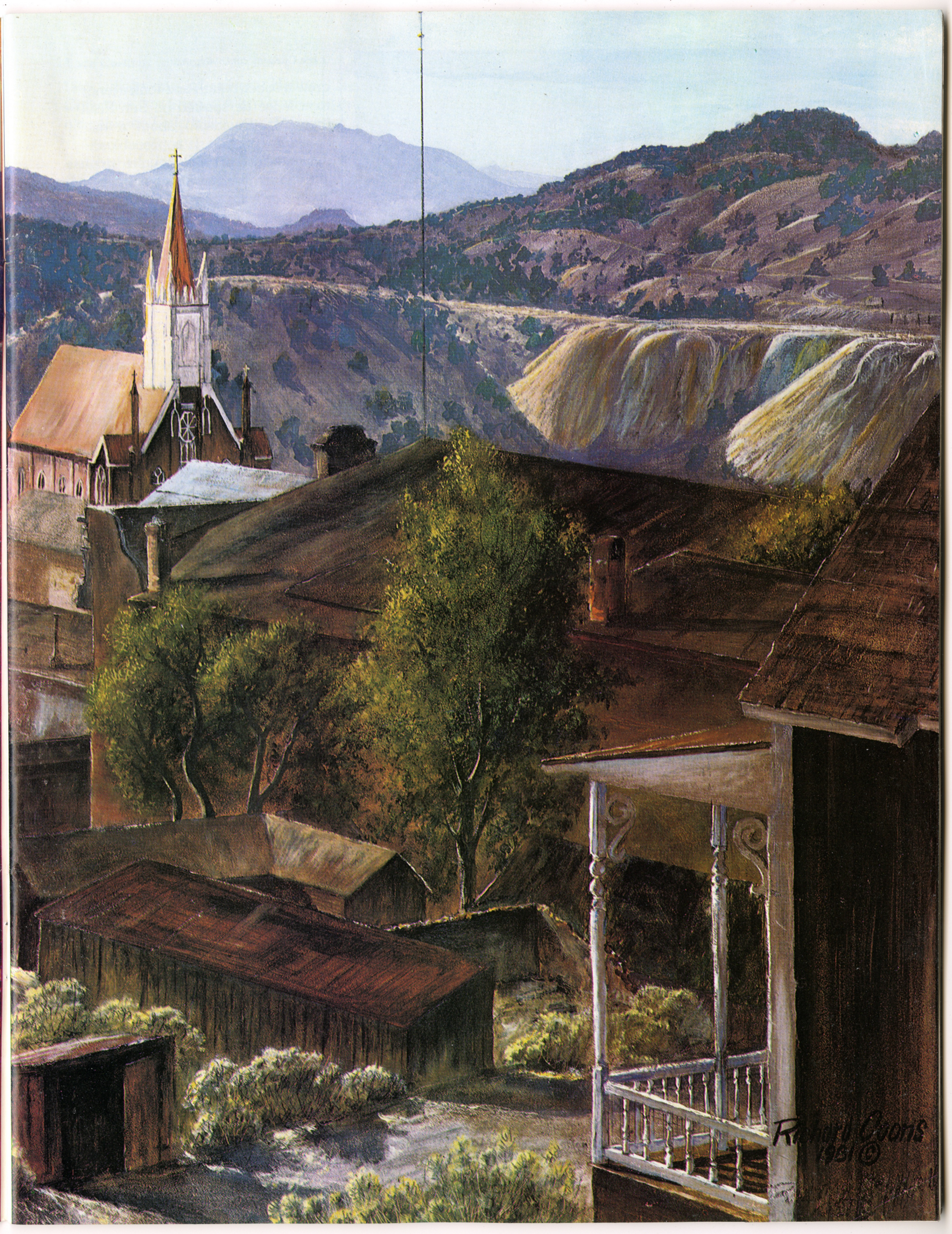


"Virginia City - Queen of the Comstock" oil painting by Richard Coons. Fine reproductions beautifully framed are available. Send $120 to Jill Romo, RR2, Box 237, Swall Meadows, CA 93514.


Richard Evans
1951 ©

Lace Curtains *continued*

drew a sober breath and took a fancy to a ledge he spotted on Sun Peak (now Mt. Davidson) about a mile above the canyon. It is probably the most he did, but it was enough to draw attention to the new location. Interest in panning was suddenly revived in the little town of Gold Hill, and men searched the ground on the slopes of the mountain, finally reaching the top of the sage covered gulch known as Six Mile Canyon. One of the major difficulties for these early propectors had been the mysterious bluish grey material that persisted in clogging the gold rockers. A Mexican had said it was "plata," but no one knew this meant silver.

In June of 1859 Peter O'Riley and Patrick McLaughlin had been working some high ground without much success. Just as they were talking of moving on to a better territory they had a change of luck when they chanced upon a quantity of gold dust in a newly dug trench. Their fortune was short lived. A Canadian scalawag by the name of Henry P.T. Comstock contrived at once to gain more than his share by claiming the homestead rights to 160 acres of land, demanding and getting a cut from the befuddled prospectors.

Fate had smiled on a strange pair. The city that would soon burst upon the world would carry Old Virginia's name and the Comstock Lode is known everywhere, though Comstock himself had little to do with future activity. It was the other side of fate that consigned the young brothers Hosea and Allen Grosh to obscurity when they died within months of each other, Hosea from a wound from his own pick and Allen in a Sierra blizzard, after years of work and the discovery that would have made them famous. At the time of the

(continued on next page)

TOP: The Savage Mansion on D Street in Virginia City. It was once the mine office and is now a Victorian Hotel. President Grant spoke here. Valerie J. Naso photo

CENTER: Piper's Opera House after a snowstorm, Virginia City, Nevada. Valerie J. Naso photo

BOTTOM: The Mackay Mansion as seen from the sagging front porch of the house across the street, Virginia City, Nevada.

1859 discovery of silver, Henry Comstock was living in Allen Grosh's old cabin on Gold Hill.

There were no lace curtains in those early cabins. The thing that sustained the men through the hunger and cold and deprivation was the dream of getting rich. They crawled over the hills during the day and returned at night to shacks made of pieces of canvas and brush and crude dugouts

Town of Gold Hill and mine workings as seen from the pink Victorian, a local landmark. *Valerie J. Naso photo.*

in the sides of the mountain. The howling wind that is still called a Washoe Zephyr ripped their canvas apart and sent it flying down the canyons and snow dripped into their makeshift beds.

Consequently, the first bar in Virginia City was greeted with almost as much enthusiasm as the gold and silver. John L. Moore arrived after a three week trip across the Sierra from San Francisco in March of 1860 with 2,100 pounds of freight that was mostly whiskey and blankets. His tent was scarcely up before the rush for the drinks began. A canvas flap down the middle of a 15x52 foot tent turned the place into a hotel where about thirty weary people paid a dollar for the use of a pair of blankets on that first night of business.

Gold Hill, however, claims to this day that the two-story stone hotel built in 1859 in the heart of town is the only edifice fit to be known as the first Nevada hostelry in the area. It is still open.

Gold Hill fit itself snugly around the curve of the steep canyon just three quarters of a mile south of Virginia City. A scant three miles below were Silver City and the infamous Devil's Gate where thieves made a living off the stream of people threading their way in a continuous line up the tight canyon to the mines.

Every imaginable type and nationality came in search of wealth. There were the Chinese who played Ma Jong and lived below D Street in Virginia City. There were promoters and thugs, prostitutes and gamblers and the men of vision who worked hard and became famous. They thought big and talked in grandiose terms, stocks were traded on street corners with little regard for reality and claim notices were vague and frequently altered. In almost no time a city was built on Mt.Davidson. It seethed with life; teams and wagons crowded the narrow streets and the activity never stopped. Beneath these streets mining went on constantly as tunnels spread their lengthening fingers under every building in town. Philip Deidesheimer, a young German engineer, worked out the system of square set stones that freed the miners from collapsing walls, and Adolph Sutro built his incredible four-mile tunnel to drain excess water from the mines.

Mark Twain wrote about this life after he threw down his pick in Aurora in 1862 and took a job as a reporter on the Territorial Enterprise at $25 a week. He would become the newspaper's most famous editor.

Four Irishmen, John W. Mackay, James G. Fair, James C. Flood and William S. O'Brien were known as the Bonanza kings and they shaped mining history. Flood and O'Brien were partners in the "Auction Lunch" in San Francisco, but it was their connections in the stock market that eventually led to the partnership.

Mackay was an honest, intelligent man, Fair was known as "Slippery Jim" because of his business practices and O'Brien was included by circumstance more than design, but together they developed the Big Bonanza, one of the world's greatest mines.

Virginia City flourished, the International Hotel across the street from the offices of the Enterprise boasted the first elevator west of the Mississippi, and ladies spared not a dime in ordering the most elegant finery to be worn amidst the rocks and sagebrush. Stagecoaches took them

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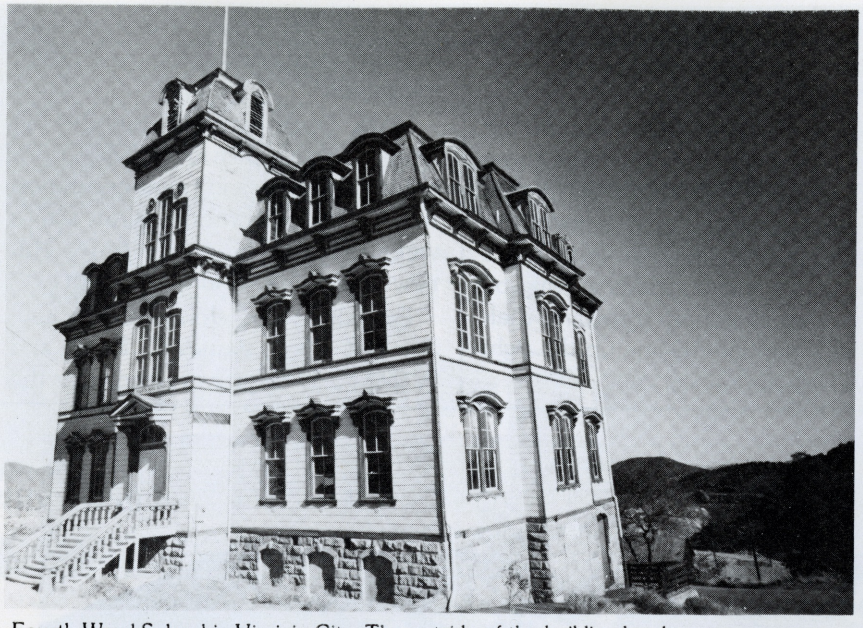

Fourth Ward School in Virginia City. The outside of the building has been completely restored and work may begin soon on the interior. Valerie J. Naso photo

Genoa was Nevada's first settlement in 1851. This is the way it looks today. Valerie J. Naso photo

The original Gold Hill Hotel built in 1859. It is still open for business, though reservations are required. Valerie J. Naso photo

where they wanted to go - if they did not pitch over into a ravine first. One coach went over the edge of a cliff only to rest in the branches of a tree. It was said that upon looking the thousand feet to the bottom the passengers counted themselves fortunate to be alive and made no rebuke to the careless driver.

This changed with the building of the Virginia and Truckee Railroad in 1869 when a trip to Reno could be made in three hours and fifteen minutes. It is not hard to imagine the gaiety of the long ago departure of the train carrying revelers to the Eighth Annual Target Excursion and Picnic of the Emmet Guard on a fair Sunday in June of 1873. Music was played on the trip by the National Guard Band, passengers climbed aboard at Gold Hill and crowded the two coaches and five flat cars. More came on at Carson City and another engine was added. By the time the group arrived at the Bowers Mansion at Franktown in Carson Valley, everyone was in fine spirits and the picnic was described as "merry as a marriage ball" in the Territorial Enterprise.

The huge house had been built in 1861 by Sandy Bowers at a cost of $400,000 as a monument to his status as Nevada's first millionaire. He had married Eilley, a washerwoman at Gold Canyon who had a claim adjoining his, and with the riches from what became the Imperial Mine they toured Europe and squandered their fortune. Sandy was fond of saying, "I've got money to throw at the birds;" however, after his death Eilley was reduced to running a boarding house.

The area seems to be ever popular with eccentric mining men. A century later, millionaire Charlie Steen built a large house and a striking circular barn on Franktown Road, but he was to have it only a short time until bankruptcy overtook him. He is back in the desert living in a shack and searching for a new bonanza.

Other towns mushroomed near Virginia City, and Silver City was one of them. The ladies of this town gave a lavish Grand Ball at the Armory Hall on June 21, 1873 for the purpose of raising funds to repair the cemetery

Continued on next page

and restore the surrounding fence. It was in this cemetery that Hosea Grosh was buried. The ball was a resounding success, as was most anything entered into in those enthusiastic times.

Genoa was Nevada's first settlement, though it was still part of Utah in 1851. John Reese opened a trading post at the foot of Daggett Pass, a major route over the Sierra. The town grew around Reese's first log cabin and when Virginia City residents were ready for a vacation they journeyed to the Genoa Hot Springs, a resort with "thirty-two airy rooms and mud baths just two miles south of town on the stage road."

Genoa is still active in a lethargic sort of way. It thrives on being Nevada's first - the bar is the oldest in the state - and Sierra Shadows development is building new Victorian houses on the gentle alluvial fan east of town.

In the 1870's Chinese doctors advertised miracle cures in the Enterprise, one popular ad promised cures for "obstacles to marriage" and a clairvoyant offered another type of assistance. Dr. le Richeau offered to pay $1,000 for cancer cases not cured by his Golden Balsam.

Piper's Opera House nurtured the soul with a production of Macbeth where orchestra seats were priced at one dollar. All the town turned out for The Great New York and New Orleans Zoological and Equestrian Exposition in the summer of 1873. Two immense pavilions covered two acres and the attractions included "a liliputian elephant and a mammoth African tapir."

This lively interest in everything is what has kept Virginia City from becoming a true ghost town. After all, what can you say about a town that has a camel race every fall?

Step into the present on that winter evening we were talking about and watch the lights flicker on. The creaky board sidewalk is quieter than it is during the mad summer tourist season and a visitor can strip away the layers of honky tonk and see some of the real town and meet its people.

The Crystal Bar is a good place to start. Old photographs adorn the walls, a priceless oil painting of the camp hangs behind the bar and a player piano has a sign reading, "Music Changed Weekly." Owners Margaret and Bill Marks celebrated a remarkable event on November 3, 1981. On that day they closed the bar to the public and threw a party for their friends to mark the 80th anniversary of Bill's dad going into business at The Crystal in 1901. Fresh yellow flowers still dominated the bar the following evening and Barbara Smith passed glasses over and around them. Judge Ed Colletti, another native of Virginia City, was said to have remarked, "They sure grow big dandelions around here."

Barbara has lived in Virginia City for seven years and has never lived more than 150 miles away. "I'll never leave," she said. "Never." That is the way most of the 700 residents feel about their town. There weren't many people at the bar and Barbara talked about The Crystal. "The chandeliers were made in France 115 years ago; also the back bar. It's the only one in town they try to keep original. The locals come here — like last night for the party."

Mae Bromund, widow of the famed western artist Cal E. Bromund (Mae still runs the beautiful Bromund Gallery on B Street), and Lorraine Gipi, who owns the Silver Stope Antiques Shop, were discussing how to make milk soup. "See, at The Crystal you trade recipes, tell jokes, that kind of thing," Barbara said. "This town does everything. They chartered a bus to go down to the Rams-49er game. They charter fishing boats and go either to Tahoe or the Bay." Barbara grinned. "My mother wants to go fishing."

Then there's the Thank-God-It's-Over party held every fall after the tourists have gone. This year the residents gathered on November 15th to enjoy the special Chinese dinner at the Sharon House and congratulate themselves on having survived another summer. The only mention of this event was a small hand lettered sign on Bill's wall with the letters TGIO.

(continued on next page)

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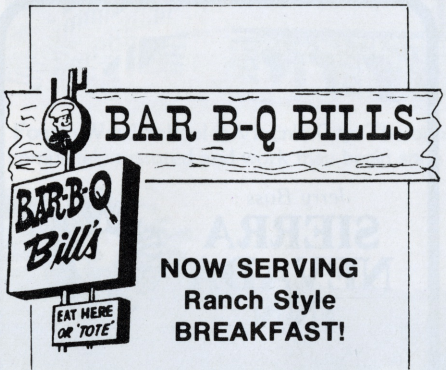

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Lace Curtains *continued*

Bill is round and friendly. "It's kind of nice to live in a small town without the hubbub of a big city," he said. "Mother and dad were born here, my grandparents were miners here." His grandfather was John Marks, Fire Chief for Gold Hill. His badge is one of the many items Bill can pull out from behind the bar. Has he ever considered opening a museum? "I thought about it twenty years ago, but I didn't do it. Some people call it junk, others think they're treasures."

Bill attended the old Fourth Ward School, now a semi-restored landmark. "There were great big open rooms, high ceilings and pot-bellied stoves. We were the last class to graduate before it closed in '36. It was a mining camp then; the tourists didn't start coming until the thirties."

As a boy, Bill used to build cabin forts, play cards and construct outdoor basketball courts in the dirt. "We'd gather in the cabins — ours was at the north end of town and the others had theirs in the south. Sometimes there was a confrontation between the two," he chuckled. "We didn't have cars and so everything we did was in town."

"What about the times you used to follow the funeral processions of the Chinese and eat all the goodies?" Barbara interjected. "I never did that," Bill said, not meaning a word of it.

He also remembers the morning his father walked stoutly down to the bar in his pajamas and a hat for his morning drink after his mother had tossed out all the liquor in the house.

Margaret is a nurse and she has ridden the ambulance and worked closely with the doctors. "She did everything, a real Florence Nightingale. The doctors had a lot of confidence in her," Bill said. "She knows everybody's rear end better than their faces." Margaret grinned. "It's true, though not so much as it used to be."

When she's not behind the bar Barbara is a nurse too. "We sort of run our own clinic here; everyone with an ache or pain comes in."

In between recipes, Margaret talked about The Way It Was Museum. "This is Bill's and my real baby. We really love that museum. They can bring in all the stupid dummy bars they want and it doesn't mean a thing, but the museum is important to Virginia City."

The museum is located at the north end of town and it houses a marvelous collection of the town's past. There is a blacksmith shop, a stamp mill, a collection of period costumes and a working model of the underground Big Bonanza Mine, along with many other items. Lu Ven Ayer runs the museum and says it is supposed to have a ghost, a baby that cries at night, although she has never heard it. She has experience with the ghosts of Virginia City. "I guess there was a ghost in my house up on C Street. My girl friend called my house one night while I was working and somebody picked up the phone and threw it on the floor. I'd find the door open and things on the table. Finally, I said, *'please* leave the door closed!' After that it would be shut."

It is not surprising that such a place would have ghostly legends. Many people died young and any number of infants failed to survive. Miners put their lives on the line every time they went down in the rattling cages to work in the bowels of the earth. Until the invention of the safety cage, a device with wheels on both sides to grip the walls in case a cable broke, such an accident meant certain death. The cemetery at the edge of town has many a marble testimonial to the heartache of the times.

"What to us is life without thee:
Darkness and despair alone:
When with sighs we seek to find thee
This tomb proclaims that thou art gone."

This is from the grave of a man who died when he was but 35 years old. How? We will never know.

There were many who lived long and built mansions in the sky in the finest Victorian tradition and some of the best of these are open to the public. John W. Mackay arrived in this country as a youth from Dublin, Ireland. He came west with nothing but a pick and shovel, but he would be known as "The Prince of Miners." He and Fair brought fresh water by pipeline to Virginia City, he built the

Continued on next page . . .

Postal Telegraph and founded the Mackay School of Mines at the University of Nevada in Reno. His fortune from the Big Bonanza was immense — it is estimated he took in $1,250 an hour for nine years — and during this time he lived in the elegant brick house on D Street that was originally the Gould and Curry Mine office. Fair also lived there for two years following the devastating fire of 1875.

This opulence might be surprising in any other mining camp, but not in Virginia City. A huge mirror in the parlor was especially made in Paris and is backed with diamond dust and a sheet of gold. It will never streak. The moldings are gold leaf and the 1831 pianoforte is still playable.

There is a photograph of Mackay with his Japanese valet and President Grant taken October 28, 1879 when Grant toured the Big Bonanza. Afterward, Grant gave a speech from the second floor balcony of the Savage Mansion during which he is supposed to have said, "I never want to get any closer to hell than that."

The Savage was once the office for the mine and living quarters for the superintendent. Twenty years ago it was a falling down wreck, but it was literally lifted off its foundations and put back together. John F. Kennedy signed a plaque when restoration began in 1962 and it hangs in the first floor alcove. Bob Kugler has turned it into a charming Victorian hotel where breakfast is served to guests in the original kitchen. "There are two complete kitchens in the house. In those days children were served separately from the family," Bob said.

The view from the front windows is the old Hale and Norcross Mine where they are working for gold and silver and "hoping for a jackpot." An old photograph shows the two lots next door planted in alfalfa to ensure feed for the horses. Those were the days when the coke ovens on the hill supplied the gas that lit all the streets of Virginia City.

Even in the dead of winter it is not quiet and it's a good bet that some of the lively music will be coming from The Assay Office at the north end of town. It may be songs by "Sierra Dan" Nelson and "Fiddlin' Dick" Stanley, two fine musicians. Trish Purcell bought the place a year ago after chucking 26 years as a banker and deciding to go it on her own. She saw the ad in a San Francisco newspaper and had to ask her partner, Don Nelson, where Virginia City was, but when she arrived she knew it was right.

The building was put up in 1859 and was actually used as an assay office at the time. "When I got the place I was

View of Virginia City in 1880 looking toward Mt. Davidson.
Photo courtesy of Nevada Historical Society.

The house was built in 1861 and has never been vacant, rented or restored. Elvira and Howard Kielbaugh bought it furnished in 1962 and it is their life's work. Everything is as it used to be. The iron and nickel plated stove in the office was built in 1870 and Howard stoked it lovingly, gesturing with one hand toward the antique hoddy. "Servants would put hot coals in that, put it under Mackay's feet and what was he doing? Counting his millions."

The open vault shows where Mackay's fortune was stored. "It's the only mine in the Comstock that still has the books to prove what they're talking about."

(continued on page 38)

Richard Coons
. . . The Ideal Life

by Jane Fisher

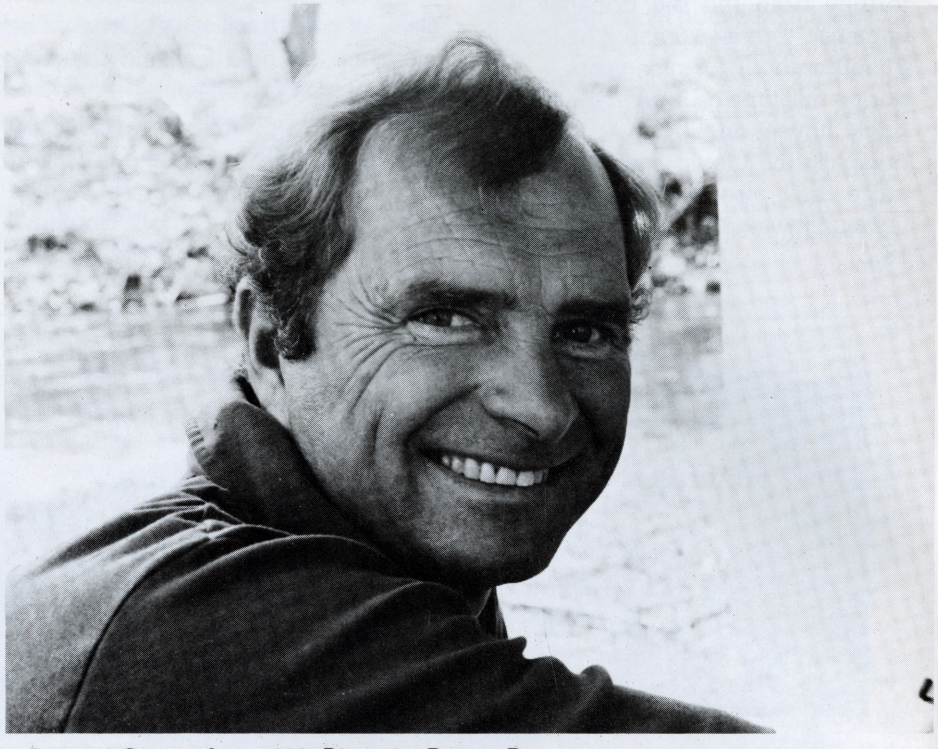
Richard Coons grew up in the high, clear air of Eastern Sierra country. There was the river to fish in the shade of cottonwoods and willows, tall blue and brown mountains to explore, the rattle of golden aspen leaves in autumn, and skiing when snow filled the canyons of the Sierra. Now he holds those landscapes in his brushes and captures time with canvas and paint.

"I love the scenes I paint. My make-up is perfect for this kind of painting. I've always loved the mountains. There are so many places where you say, 'Wouldn't it be great if you could paint that!'

"As the seasons and conditions change, all of a sudden something that wasn't there before begs to be done. At times I have stopped right in the middle of one painting to catch the scene for another, while it was there."

An engaging grin, a soft-spoken courtesy, and a youthful, athletic appearance may mislead you, when you first meet, to believe that "Dick" is very young and shy. But observe: he watches gravely; he listens intently; he weighs all of what is going on -- the scene, the people, the entire interface as though seeing through to the bones and dreams. When he talks about painting, he is confident and positive. He has an impressive art library and enjoys arguing, discussing and sharing insights on his favorite subject, painting.

"There is still so much to learn. I think it will be endless," he says. "I feel like Rembrandt did, sometimes: when he finished a portrait and it didn't talk, he didn't think it was good enough."



Richard Coons, June 1982. Photo by Bonnie Rae

Coons punches holes in the sophistry and art-world hype surrounding painting, yet speaks of it with love and respect. He sees himself as clearly as he sees the mountains he lives with. It's called personal integrity.

What is this ideal life? "I knew you had to do something in this life," Coons says. "At first I thought money was it." After college, he became a successful contractor and developer.

"Just making money wasn't what it was cracked up to be. Once I learned how, the challenge was gone. But it has given Marilyn and me the freedom to live our lives the way we want. I am not under pressure to crank out commercial paintings. I can paint what and where I want. I enjoy what I am doing. I don't need approval or applause -- I would do it anyway." But he does receive approval and applause as demand for his work increases.

By the time Richard had concluded that money wasn't an end in itself, he had already become intrigued with the idea of painting. He had always been artistic, was schooled in perspective and architectural drawing through his construction work, and enjoyed studying paintings. His wife had started painting and objected to his "fooling around" with her work. So he decided to do some of his own. Marilyn is now an enthusiastic fan of her husband's talent. "He is a perfectionist," she declares. "He does everything well." Richard says she has become an accomplished critic.

Coons had been acquainted with the work and philosophy of Robert Clunie since his high school friendship with Robert's son, Kent, and had come to revere the man and his talent.

"I realized he was one of the great painters. If you knew him and didn't take advantage of the chance to learn from him , it would be a crime and a waste. In the beginning, he tried to discourage me, because so many people think they want to paint and it turns out to be just a spur of the moment notion. With him, his painting is number one, even above himself.

continued on page 18

Top: *Mt. Tom in late afternoon. 16"x22" oil on panel.*
Bottom: *Hungry Packer Lake, Sabrina Basin, July morning. 22"x28" oil on panel.*

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Richard Coons *continued*

"He has been painting for seventy years. I don't know of anything else on this earth you could spend seventy years at and still hardly wait to get out of bed and do it.

"If you studied and could learn from all the finest painters who ever lived, you would know I had the best right here. If you start right, you learn how to learn. The answer is in nature. Your eye has to see it before your mind can comprehend it. To paint, you have to observe eighty percent of the time and paint twenty percent. Clunie gave me that base to start with.

"I couldn't go anywhere on this earth for a better education on composition, values, and all that goes into art, than I have had from him. We get out and see everything we can to criticize and critique by example. In turn, I have to be my own hardest critic.

"He taught me how to put paint on a canvas. He taught me how to use the tools, but equally important was his philosophy of the art of living."

"Clunie never sees things in terms of monetary values. For instance, if we go into a museum, all the paintings we are studying are priceless, so there is no sense of dollars. No matter what it took to make those paintings, they were worth it. He believes in using the finest materials, to last the longest time.

"There's a lot I haven't had to learn by trial and error because I've had the advantage of his seventy years of experience. I've learned my own things the hard way, though.

"I bought a very old and valuable book on art the other day, written at a time in history before all this modern interpretation and impressionism was popular, when artists were sticking to nature. I find the old masters reaffirm the truths that Clunie taught me.

"He taught me how to put paint on a canvas. He taught me how to use the tools, but equally important was his philosophy of the art of living."

Coons tells about how he was influenced by the antithesis of his mentor, too. He was befriended by Larry Kronquist, for twenty-seven years a successful Laguna Beach art dealer, and one of those pivotal tastemakers who act more as a manager for a painter's career than as a buyer's agent. "We argued our way all over the country. He was like a director trying to be an image maker, trying to change me from a hick-from-the-sticks into a commercial figure he could sell. The sun rose and set on the dollar bill. He was going to rearrange my whole life, re-designing his hillbilly friend to create the image he wanted to sell -- my house, my lifestyle, my studio, my signature on my paintings."

The Coons home is small, but charming and so is Marilyn, a pretty, curly-haired blonde. "But I thought for awhile I might have to be replaced," she laughs.

"As it turned out," Richard admits, "he did influence my thinking in some ways, not in the commercial aspect of art. For instance, he did give me a valuable sense of the dramatic quality necessary to translate feelings into a scene."

Do you paint almost all the time?

"Yes. I like to listen to symphonic music, and I take time off to play golf or get some type of exercise almost every day, but I still am always looking for the perfect scene. Sports and painting are a wonderful combination, using your muscles and mind."

Where do you paint?

"This area is a gold mine for spots to paint. In July and August I go into the mountains, either taking a horse and mule, or hiking and hauling my gear in and out. I paint on-site in desert towns, Death Valley and along the foothills. I use a den-studio at home to do finishing work, polishing and detail. I like variety, so I also paint on the ocean - Morro Bay, Laguna. Marilyn doesn't go into the mountains or on-site much. She doesn't care for roughing it. You have to be a loner at that, anyway, to follow your own inspirations."

(continued on next page)

Richard Coons *continued*

How is your day organized when you are painting?

Most of the time you think painting twenty-four hours a day. I usually put in about six hours of intensive work. Up in the mountains, in the long days of summer, time is so valuable there is a tendency to overwork.

How do you decide what you will paint? Does a scene grow and change as you paint it?

"When you find a spot that is a good composition, you feel lucky, like finding a gold mine. My intent is to represent what you are looking at. I know of no one who goes in these mountains and doesn't see something that just overwhelms him. A camera won't really capture it. It can't get the scope and perspective. A painter can show depth and emotion, pull in the foreground, leave out all the man-made ugliness. I use binoculars for detail, but have to be careful about putting it back into perspective."

"When you take a fragment out of nature, which is perfect to begin with, you have to recompose the whole thing into a little universe so that it is perfect again."

Do you get into the landscape as you paint it, perhaps see more than we do?

"When you take a fragment out of nature, which is perfect to begin with, you have to recompose the whole thing into a little universe so that it is perfect again. When I began to paint, Clunie told me to keep things a year and then decide if I thought they were any good. I burned fifty paintings in my early days. I used to throw rocks at my canvases. They must be so very well planned. To spend a lot of time to paint cleanly is a job of design. You have to know what the composition is going to be before you do it."

Did you hesitate to put yourself in competition, so to speak, with Robert Clunie? How did you feel about entering the field?

"I am not in competition with a man who always has five years of back orders ahead of him! After all the years he has been painting, the only ones he personally owns are those he is working on at the moment. I am in competition with anyone who ever painted, in a way. I feel I can paint as well, for what I am painting. Rembrandt never painted the Sierra but I'd like to paint them the way he would have. From the start, Clunie was my critic -- he would criticize and I would try to improve, but I never had the feeling I couldn't do it.

"My idea of a painting critic is someone who knows what he is talking about -- someone who is a good painter, not just someone who has read what other people have to say. So many critics have an entirely different slant on things" -- referring to the study of nature, the idea of personal integrity, being your own natural self. "They want you to have a dramatic personality or do something crazy so they have a gimmick to write about. You don't get your name in the paper if you are leading a good life. I have a critic and friend in Virginia City, Mae Bromund. She is a promoter, and has an art gallery. At the age of eighty, she is not sitting and having tea; she's having her martini's and planning the next day's attack."

How is your painting different from Clunie's, in your opinion?

"I have had other influences in my life. Your own personality always gets into the picture. We both paint from reality; my paintings are tempered by all I've seen in my studies, books, and travels, and all the people I have learned from. Perhaps I use warmer colors. I think I spend more time on my drawings, where he may abbreviate. For instance, simplifying a complex mountain. I felt I was overworking them, then tried to simplify. Now I am back to making a choice, trying to get more of a portrait of the mountain."

Coons' work is different from Clunie's in other ways, too. Some of his most beautiful work captures the roundness and flowing lines of nature,

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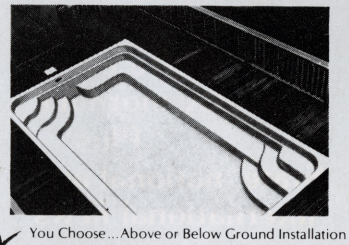

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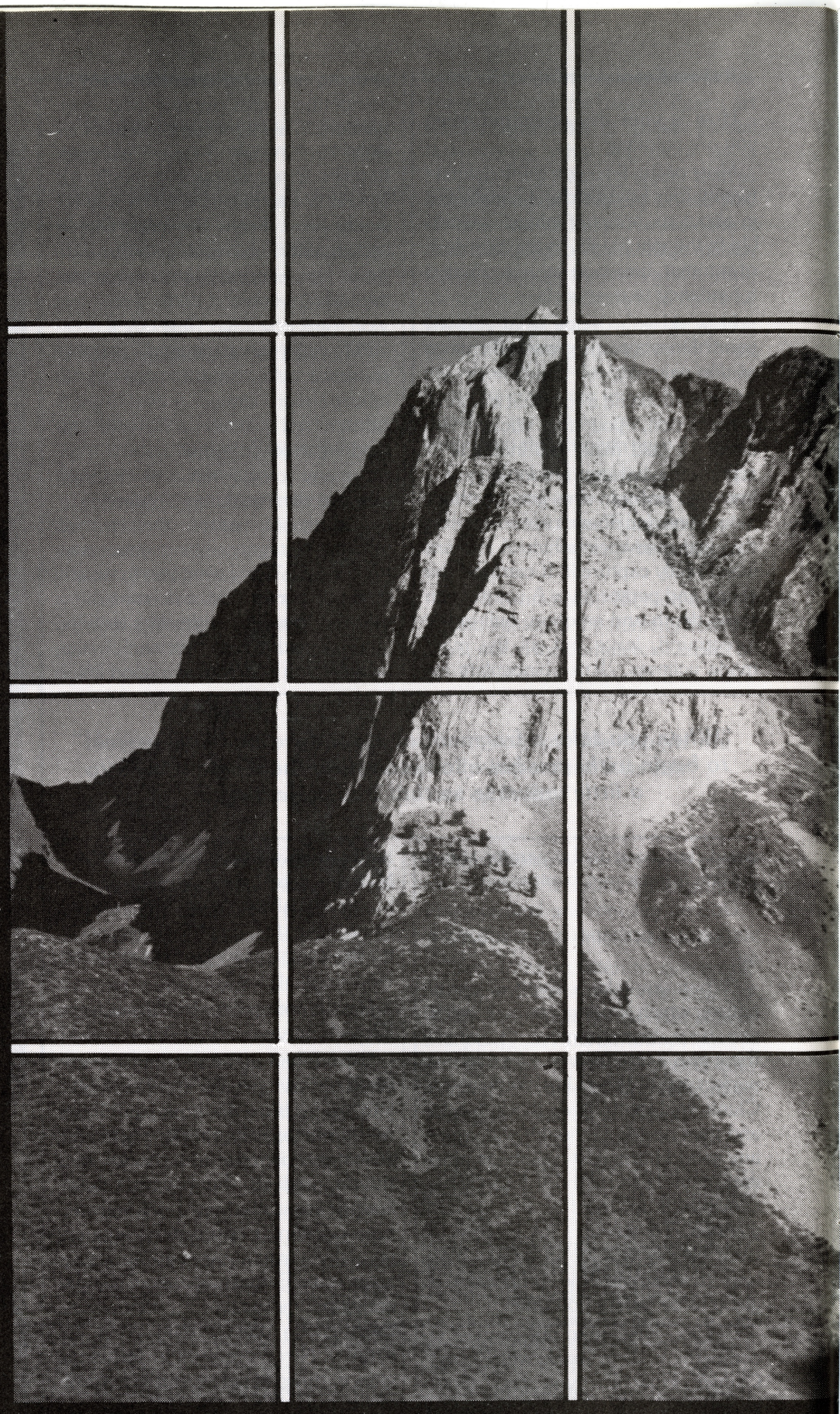

Sierra Daily News

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Richard Coons *continued*

and contrasts the texture of fine straight lines of architecture against it.

Do you have a favorite painting?

"I like whatever I am painting. When it is finished, I have really enjoyed myself. I do have some I have especially enjoyed. Mt. Tom, for instance. The pyramid shape makes it very dynamic. It is a cold mountain, with all that warm sun on the tufa rocks in the foreground, and all that air back in there, making the rhythm and composition all come together to contribute to a good painting as well as a favorite scene.

"Life is like a good painting . . ." "For all the busyness you need the quiet areas, for the horizontals you need the perpendiculars, and the warm against the cool."

"One time I spent three weeks at Lake George. On the first day it was almost overwhelming, but as I studied it day after day, in every light, and came to know it intimately, the appreciation grew and grew. Robert Clunie has said, 'You own this to the extent of your appreciation of it.'

"We live in such a grand State - it would be a waste to put your ego ahead of it and change it to look like somewhere or something else. It's never the same. You always see a scene or a composition in a new way."

The ideal life of an artist. Time and money to travel and study when and where you please, the feeling of having the best of all teachers in art and philosophy, the courage to paint in terms of heart without regard for critic or commerce. The life of Richard Coons.

"Life is like a good painting," he says. "For all the busyness you need the quiet areas, for the horizontals you need perpendiculars, and the warm against the cool."•

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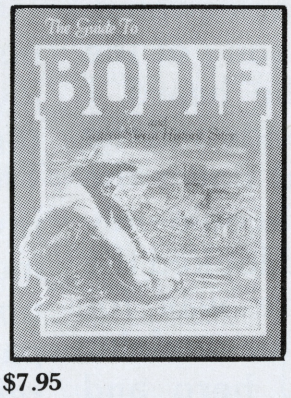

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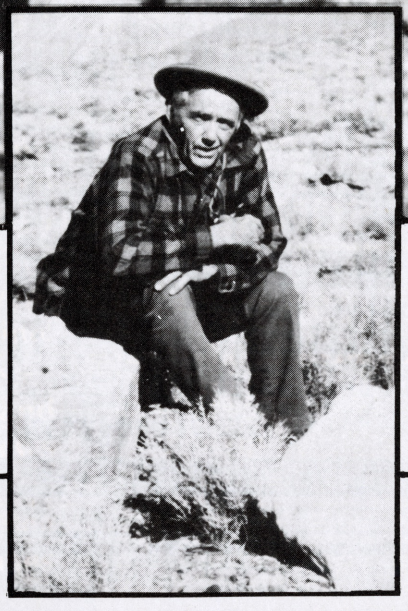

Keeper

"I first saw the light of day near a Minnesota tamarack swamp, where at that time the song of the timberwolf could still be heard. I loved the swamp, the ponds and the hills. Later, as I looked down the road to higher learning, I could only see a stack of books and looked the other way. Shakespeare was for sissies. Train riding, blue yodeler Jimmy Rogers was my hero and freight train blues my traveling song. The Rocky mountains were calling and I had to ramble. I have no degree and my only title "Keeper of the Asses," was bestowed on me when the burro sanctuary was created in my patrol district in 1957.

I am not a scientist and this is not intended to be a scientific journal, rather it is a chronological report of an on the scene observer. The data presented are taken from investigation reports, recorded incidents and altercations as they unfolded during 21 years of patrolling the first and only ass refuge in western donkey land for the State of California Department of Fish and Game.

This is a digest of my unpublished book — *Keeper of the Asses.*

Photo by Rick McIntyre

of the Asses

by Vern Burandt

The 1953 burro statute was new when I was assigned the Game Wardens position in Southern Inyo County. This strict new law was a first, in that it gave complete protection to a non-native animal. Whats more, the penalty for killing a burro was far stiffer than for killing a native big-horn sheep.

Rumor had painted a distorted picture of what I would find in the far flung reaches of my eight thousand square mile patrol district. I had expected to find "caravans of gun vandals blasting everything in sight". It was soon obvious that I had been deprived of my dream of making heroic mass arrests of these criminals. My hopes of carving a niche alongside the famous had also been shattered. I soothed myself with the thought that the lawless had heard of my arrival.

Patrolling out of my Lone Pine headquarters I soon learned much about this lonesome land. I found no sign of "dead and butchered" burros, in fact the burros were very much alive and generously distributed. If you couldn't see one you at least could see where they had been. Over-used vegetation and heavy trailing in and around water-holes was much in evidence. I had been used to looking at depleted Sierra winter deer ranges but had never before witnessed anything like this burro blitzed desert habitat.

While checking complaints some desert residents were being contacted who were instrumental in getting the 1953 burro law passed. One group displayed a picture of 21 burro heads and offal that had been taken 20 years previously when burros were still unprotected. They boasted "it might be old, but it sure helped put teeth in the burro law."

Although all reports of "burro molestation" were always checked out it took careful planning to give coverage to such a large diversified district. Foot patrol into the Sierra golden trout habitat was time consuming. Protection of bighorn sheep, deer and elk were also part of my patrol duties. Sometimes I couldn't get loose right away to make an immediate investigation. You can only fill one physical space at a time.

In 1956, after a Sunset magazine article about Saline Valley, there was an increase in both desert travel and reported "burro violations."

One report stated that burros were being shot from helicopters in the Panamint Mountains. During the investigations the craft was spotted and it was noted that it made unusually loud popping noises while

Continued on next page . . .

Fence line at Eagle Borax (Death Valley). Right side is protected from wild burros, left side has been overbrowsed by burros.

One of the many burro trails in Death Valley

Photos by Rick McIntyre

landing and taking off. After the number of the craft was obtained, a check showed that the chopper had been leased by the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey. This agency was doing some boundary line verification and bench mark placement on Death Valley's perimeter. They had no interest in burros and carried no firearms.

About this same time a complainant told of finding an Argus Mountain mining operation that had usurped all the water in an eastside canyon. The report stated that all the burros were dying of thirst. Field investigation proved that the mining company had developed a well for their mill operation and prior to drilling for water that part of the canyon was dry. There was no sign of any dead burros. However, there were some ancient bleached burro bones in the wash. A sizeable spring up the canyon furnished water for burros and wild life. Bogus complaints were common. To say the least they were annoying and time consuming. In most cases the reporting party did not use common sense.

On a routine patrol of Saline Valley one busy week-end some travelers, looking through binoculars at a band of wild burros was contacted. Their questions were being answered when a dust cloud down the road indicated an approaching vehicle. Before I got back to the road, a carry-all had stopped and there was an immediate blaring of the auto's horn as one of the three women in the back seat was reaching over the male driver, putting steady pressure on the horn button. Before I was through apologizing for their brief delay one of the females snorted "Well, it's about time we see one of you lazy Game Wardens — and when we find one he's blocking the road and out harassing the public." I didn't like their demeanor and turned to leave when the head biddy shrieked "Wait a minute you're a civil servant

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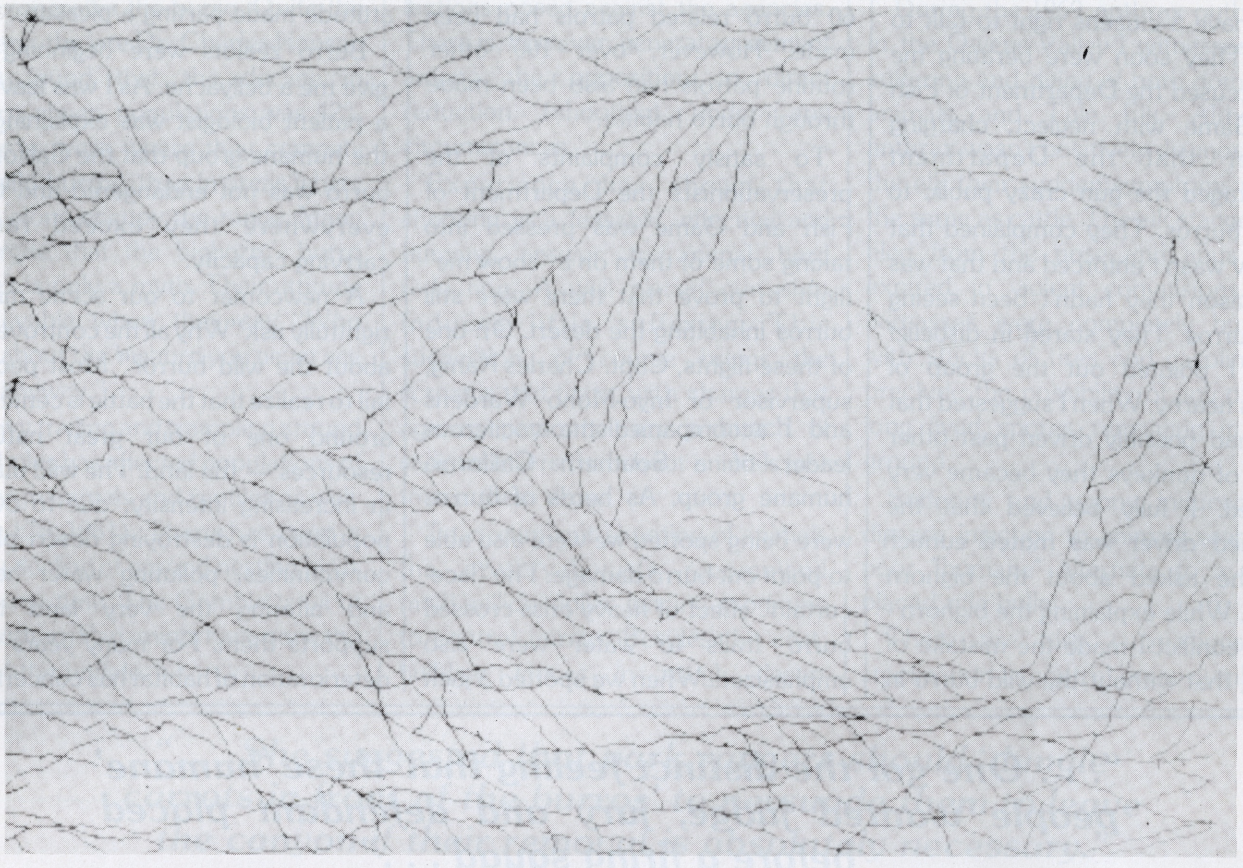

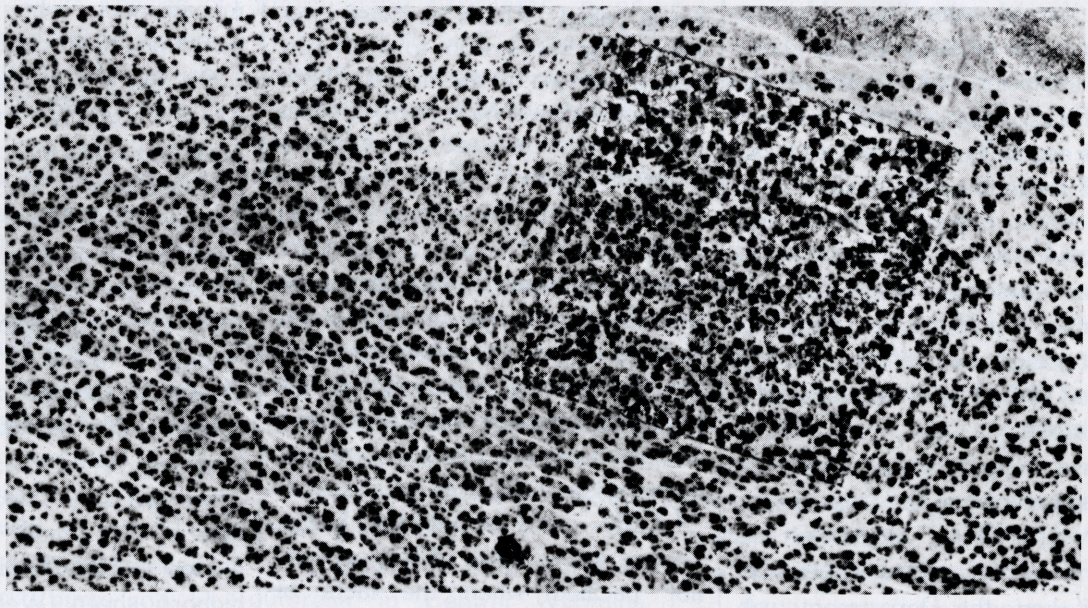

Upper plate shows computer digitization of burro trails on the Naval Weapons Center in the Junction Ranch area. Trail network is caused mainly by feral burros, although some wild horses and cattle use the area. Note the general absence of trails within the five acre enclosure (lower aerial photo) established in 1976.

and I have a citizens right to talk to you." They soon were berating me and accused the Department of Fish and Game with neglect, charging further that the Department encouraged the gun crazy public to shoot burros. They complained that the law wasn't enforced and that was the reason they hadn't been seeing any burros. They stared in disbelief when I pointed out the group of burros nearby. When I suggested that they had possibly driven past other herds of donkeys they became very irritated. I fully believed that the subdued driver was muted eunuch until he asked about the bighorn sheep. While explaining the bighorn - burro conflict I made the mistake of saying that without the wild burro in the picture, our desert mountains would furnish the best bighorn hunting in the western states. There was an explosion. "Sure that's all you want. Raise more animals so your hunters can spill more blood and you can sell more hunting licenses, and whats more, depleted ranges and over-populations is a cliche' you butchers use from Maine to California." I could see that this group was not going to be confused with any facts, so I wished them well and beat a hasty retreat.

Absurd and groundless complaints continued to plague the Department of Fish and Game. Although the crescendo of the creaking wheels was way off key, the Department was nevertheless forced into a defensive position and asked to prove that the desert was being patrolled. The Department of Fish and Game requested me to research my daily activity reports. At that time (1958) I had completed 4 years of patrolling Inyo Counties hinterlands. The record revealed that during that time period, 60 burro related patrols had been made. However, over 100 other routine patrols had also been made through burro habitat.

To satisfy complaints of the preservationists the Department of Fish and Game was pressed into taking some of them on a "show me" flight to prove that there were still burros inhabiting the desert. On one of these flights, Capt. Charles Kanig, supervisor of Inyo-Mono Wardens and I accompanied the vociferous leader of a Southern California humane group. As herds of burros were being spotted we were also able to point out burro damage. The "lace-curtain" effect of heavy criss-crossed burro trails to water were also emphasized. When we spotted a jack and a jenny in an amorous pose, Capt. Kanig yelled, "That's all these long-eared ridge runners got to do is make babies and eat up the desert. That's why you'll always have burros thicker than turds around a country schoolhouse!" The heckler complained that the several hundred burros sighted during the flight weren't very many for all the desert we saw. He continued to complain about hunters and the Captain reminded him that hunters' license money was paying for his plane ride. Later, when we joined the main party, there was more dissatisfaction expressed. "Nobody cares about the burro, nobody gets arrested." The group was not pacified when the facts of convictions for violating the burro law were brought up. The preservationists were enraged when they heard that the maximum penalty and jail term had not been meted out. One got the distinct feeling that these "humane" people wanted judge, jury and defendant placed before a firing squad. Their vindictive, unreasonable attitude made parting a pleasure.

Burro zealots were beginning to give me a bellyache. As I was leaving, a patient biologist was explaining to the humane group that the California burro was not endangered and that everywhere they exceed range carrying capacity.

A newcomer to our scene might rightfully ask "Why all the controversy about the wild burro?" Most people fail to realize that the battle is centered around one of our great natural resources — the land. The wild burro in increasing intensity, due to over-population is destroying desert plant communities, polluting water holes and altering the very land that supports them. For many years this deterioration of habitat has concerned resource agencies, charged with management, who recognize that something must be done to curb it.

". . . One got the distinct feeling that these 'humane' people wanted judge, jury and defendant placed before a firing squad . . ."

On the other side of the clearly drawn battle lines are the preservationists proclaiming there is no damage and "nature will take its course." Documented corroborating evidence (Department of U.S. Navy 1981) (Management options for DV 1976) from field agencies show that "nature is taking its course." In the Argus Mountains of Inyo County, bighorn are feared to be extinct (DeForge 1979-1981). In fact bighorn sheep are on the decline in all areas where they must compete with burros. In 1960 Death Valley had 900 bighorn sheep (Welles and Welles 1961) In 1981 there are slightly more than 500.

Burro protectionists argue that the wild donkey should not be made the scapegoat for all the ills that befall the desert. Yet there is not any evidence

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that exonerates the burro. Quite the contrary, the late Dr. Charles Hansen (1973) found that the decline in bighorn sheep populations was 42% higher in areas where they compete with wild burros, than in areas where sheep alone occupy the range. Many will argue that the bighorn - burro conflict is only a myth. Their attitude unbelievable when they say "Who cares about the bighorn you never see them anyway."

Heavy trailing and trampling around waterholes has affected populations of smaller mammals and reptiles as well (Navy EIS 1981). There has been a steady decline of ground nesting birds within my time. The Gamble quail of the southern Panamints have gone the way of the buffalo.

Today Death Valley and the Naval Weapons center list 23 species of endangered plants. 83% of the riparian vegetation shows damage from burro over use. (Navy EIS 1981; D V E IS 1976).

Preservationists argue that the wild burro should be cherished as a reminder of our historic past. As a reward, he should roam free and undisturbed, for the part he played in settling the untamed west.

Then we have the faction that dwells on the burros "right to life" issue. Nebulous and vague explanations are given when the right to life of native wild life species is brought up. While getting sentimental about the cute, wild burro colt, let them also consider the fuzzy bighorn lamb and the downy mountain quail chick that is being crowded out of its rightful niche in the biota. The wild burro is neither charitable or conservative.

There are many opinions about the burro issue and there is even disagreement among the groups and factions posed against the agencies. There is, however, general agreement among the opposition to direct reduction (shooting) under any circumstances.

Experience has shown that shooting is a feasable, effective and humane answer to animal herd reduction. A well placed gun shot induces little suffering. This suggestion, of course brings the screams and tears, with charges that agency personnel are a bunch of sadistic killers that shoot animals just to see them drop.

To circumvent shooting of animals the preservationists recommend multi-million dollar fencing programs to control burros. Besides the cost, building fences in rough desert mountain terrain poses some engineering problems. Fencing activities will also cause wild-life disruptions, vegetation disturbance and soil erosion. The trauma induced when thirsty burros are denied access to water-holes causes fighting, crowding, injury and death.

Disease injection is another alternate suggested for burro herd reduction. Having spent a lifetime in the out of doors centered around both domestic and wild animals brings unpleasant recollections of destroying an injured pet or favorite mount. It is also unpleasant to witness an expiring diseased animal.

During the 1936 equine encephalitis outbreak in Central Wyoming I participated in the clean up. At times we were able to mercifully end the suffering of an animal that had chewed up its tongue and bloodied its head from drumming it on the ground in its attempt to rise. Others had plowed circular furrows while propelling themselves around in their death throes.

During the 1969 anthrax outbreak in the Owens Valley I witnessed the suffering and dying of both domestic animals and Tule Elk. Although anthrax wasn't positively diagnosed in the elk their sudden symptoms were the same as cattle. The elk staggered, bled from the nose and anus and expired in violent convulsions. All carcasses were completely burned with stacks of tires and gasoline to preclude the possibility of any of the long lived spores remaining in the ground.

Suffering and agony induced by disease injection to animals seems a poor "humane" alternate to a well-placed rifle bullet.

There are also suggestions of sterilization to control burro numbers but some feel this is cruel to deprive a burro of its rightful sex life.

As a grand finale to the lack of understanding of the burro issue a Los Angeles Times article on Oct. 30, 1977 was a classic example. "The assistant director of the Committee to Protect the Grand Canyon Burro, headquartered in Tuscon, said that although she had never been down in the Grand Canyon, "I don't believe it possible for the burro to cause all the destruction the National Park Service claims it does". She suggested that park rangers should "dangle carrots in front of burros" to persuade them to leave the canyon "if their removal is absolutely necessary."

At the same time a spokesman for an eastern horse fraternity stated "We believe the burros to be compatible to the Grand Canyon. The point is the Grand Canyon is an epic monument to erosion. If the burro contributes to it so be it."

". . . She suggested that park rangers should 'dangle carrots in front of the burros' to persuade them to leave the canyon if their removal is absolutely necessary."

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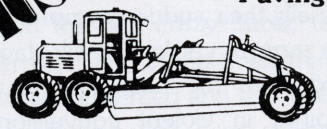
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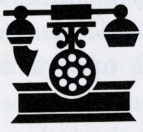
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Volumes have been written about the wild burro and its problems. Some knowledgeable writers have presented many facts. Others deal in sentiment and attempt to present convincing evidence with the net result of creating more washouts on the road to burro management. There are also research publications that disagree with the concensus of opinion of the scientific community and other researchers. During heated discussions I have heard biology students refer to these as Pseudo-researchers and Biostitutes. These publications are not all in the same class, category or degree of disagreement, yet they fan the flames of the burro controversy. It is quite generally known that there is also professional jealousy among game biologists. Their works can be highly critical. One such publication (Welles and Welles 1961) "The Bighorn of Death Valley" is known for its unabashed criticism of Resource Agencies and their "blundering" biologists who "misread" signs at the waterholes. Welles are searchers after accuracy and so state it in their writing. They claim burro water holes are "surprisingly clean," yet in describing their own observations they find the same "milling, churning, shuffling and trampling" at the water holes that the "blundering" biologists reported. Moreover, they found defecation in the water and "water trampled in by burros that had an odor that could be detected while standing above it." Also a much touted picture of 2 bighorn sheep and a burro appear in their publication. This photo is used as proof of the cameraderie of bighorn and burro by many. It must be pointed out here that bighorn don't water at burro waterholes because they love them — they drink there because they are forced to. Sometimes their communal water source is the only one within many square miles.

Although Charles B. Hunt didn't do a burro study of his own, he is "me-tooing" the Welles' in his publication, Geology, Ecology and Archaeology of Death Valley (1975) nevertheless, he expresses his own bias and enters the burro controversy. "The burro is derogatively referred to by the Park Service as "feral." In fact, the burro is a half century less feral than the Park Service. The bighorn is the pampered pet of the Park Service, but I confess a partiality for the more service-minded burro. Burros build trails in the mountains, where geologists need them." We might remind Hunt that Death Valley National Monument does not exist so burros can build trails for geologists; rather, it is there by mandate, to protect native flora, fauna and the land for posterity.

". . . It must be pointed out here that bighorn don't water at burro waterholes because they love them — they drink there because they are forced to . . ."

The 1972 April issue of National Geographic carried an article "Getting to know the wild burro of Death Valley" by Patricia Moehlmann. With cute little Sweet Pea, her baby burro, she gives the world a long-eared "Bambi" and takes the reader on a sentimental journey. Her much publicized findings have been refuted by many. While Moehlman was finding that water holes were "not befouled" and that burros were "not stripping the land," Dr. Charles Hansen and ranger Paul Foder (unpublished field notes 1971) also studying the Wildrose area were finding that burros had virtually eliminated certain plants within one mile of water and that grasses had been reduced 5 miles from water. Moreover, a host of other researchers, (Buechner 1960, Dixon 1939, McKnight 1958, Sanchez 1973,

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Summer 1939 and 1951, Weaver 1972) whose combined field experience totals nearly 100 years, found that, both before and during Moehlmans brief stay, burros were doing great environmental damage to Death Valley. Recently, on a television documentary "The Great Mojave Desert" Moehlman stated "Some are against the burro — I am biased in the other direction." A prospective juror with this attitude would be ousted. Yet today, Moehlman, bias and all, is one of a 13 member committee of the National Academy of Sciences about to make policy on burro management.

Over the years, theories and opinions of burro proponents have been discussed across meeting tables and ruminated on around many campfires. Resource managers agree and point out that, a few, through unprofessional expression of bias and personal ego satisfaction have jaded the thinking of many. They certainly have contributed large chunks of high energy fuel to the roaring inferno referred to as bighorn-burro controversy. I have found that Hunt, Moehlman and Welles publications are the reference library of preservationists used as proof that the burro doesn't hurt the desert, furthermore, arguing that these writings are scholarly and scientific.

I have always believed that scientists were unbiased students doing their testing and research in an impartial unprejudiced manner. Although having reached a conclusion they would then subject it to further testing by other scientists before unveiling it to the world. Our disclaimers have not presented one shred of scientific evidence or proof of how "surprisingly clean" or "non-befouled" burro water holes really are. In fact, they haven't even disclosed if they drink there or fill their canteens with the water.

Actually all the evidence concerning bighorn sheep and burros is never fully presented, nor is it fully understood. Burros as well as bighorn sheep defecate and urinate in their water supply at times. They go when they have to go. If they happen to be on a hillside, or at the water they just drank or are about to drink makes no difference. In either case, they are as ignorant of why or where they went as the derelict toddling down skid row has knowledge of his wet pant leg.

It must be pointed out that there is a great difference in bighorn and burro behavior and the individual impact each makes at the water hole. Burros water 3 times as often as bighorn sheep and mill around the water after drinking. Burros are approximately twice as large as sheep, they consume more forage and so deposit more waste. The average pile of fresh burro droppings nearly fills a gallon pail and weighs just under 3 lbs., whereas the scant handfull of dry pellets dropped each time by a bighorn sheep weighs a matter of ounces. There is also a proportionate difference in urination. When you add to this the fact that burros outnumber bighorn on all ranges at a ratio of at least 5 to 1 and in some areas like the Panamint Mountains 10 to 1, it can readily be seen the bighorn is out-gunned. So here we have a larger animal, the burro, with a mathematical possibility of polluting a water hole many times greater than the native sheep. Moreover, the burros' hooves are master-mixers that blend their manure into the ground, forming the muddy batter that gives burro water holes their distinctive stable smell.

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"Some are against the burro — I am biased in the other direction." "A prospective juror with this attitude would be ousted."

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Keeper of the Asses

Feral burro management on desert ranges has been an exercise in frustration. However, two things have remained constant and predictable: steady burro reproduction and public interference via lawsuits, injunctions and lots of noise. A case in point is the 1981 burro reduction program of the U.S. Navy on the Naval Weapons Center at China Lake. Within a 10 month period ending Feb. 1981, B.L.M. wranglers removed 258 burros from the vicinity of a NWC airfield, where highly trained personnel and multi-million dollar aircraft were in jeopardy. After this round-up the Navy estimated that there were in excess of 500 burros remaining in the vicinity. The continuing threat to personnel and planes prompted the Navy to shoot 648 more burros in an emergency reduction during two weekends in March, 1981. According to the Los Angeles Times, there was an immediate outcry from Cleveland Amory and the Fund for Animals, who described the burro removal as "cowardly and a particularly despicable act against the burro, an inoffensive, extremely brave, decent, extremely philosophical animal."

In Feb. 1976, at Goleta California this angry man wallowed in a sea of sentiment with a group of California game wardens as his audience. Animals and little creatures seem to be only pawns in his game. His real mission is to stop hunting and trapping. His prophetic words that day, "We might not win right away, but we are going to out-breed you," should be weighed. Amory is heralded as the "voice of the voiceless". In all fairness shouldn't he also be the "voice of the voiceless" multitudes of native creatures that are being trampled into oblivion by the burgeoning burro herds? Herds that he and his kind, thru interference, are inadvertantly responsible for creating. In Amory's 1974 book "ManKind" he suggests that hunters hunt each other. So it comes as no surprise that he places the value of the burro ahead of the lives of our military personnel and the National Defense.

Both the Navy and Death Valley National Monument have as one of their alternatives of management, total removal of burros by direct reduction. Both agencies are certainly justified in having this choice; Death Valley's mandate is to preserve a natural area, and the U.S. Navy's at the Weapons Center is to maintain a secure and undisturbed area for military weapons testing, while preserving the natural environment.

"Animals and little creatures seem to be only pawns in his game. His real mission is to stop hunting and trapping."

In both cases direct reduction would be most cost-efficient. Burros could be removed quickly and carcasses left to recycle. Due to the Reagan austerity program and budget cutting this may well turn out to be the plan adopted. Some officials have expressed fear that if this is the only affordable program and emotionalism cripples its implementation then the (no action) alternate wins by default.

However, if the Navy and Death Valley are both successful in total burro removal from their ranges and wish to be safe from reintroduction then the burro herds in Panamint Valley, which lies between, will also have to be eliminated.

If total elimination cannot be accomplished then a closely monitored management plan, permanently in place, is required. One that can be operated without public interference. This would end the needless controversy and put a stop

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to the brush fire war approach that makes massive herd reduction necessary after burro populations have gotten out of hand.

Massive herd reduction isn't popular and smooth running long term burro management plans are rare. However, the BLM adopt-a-burro program has been successful but extremely expensive. According to the BLM newsbeat, their official press release, it costs $525 to round up and place a wild burro. Since 1971, the wild horse and burro program has cost the taxpayer 27 million dollars. To offset this cost, as of Oct. 1981, a fixed fee of $75, plus transportation costs is being charged each adopter.

According to the BLM, 6,000 applicants are waiting to adopt a burro, generally only 60% follow through and claim their pet. This added cost to burro adoption may further discourage adopters, and coupled with budget cutting may affect the entire adopt-a-burro program.

At this stage of the game, although recent reductions have helped, we cannot afford to lose any form of burro herd control. How serious the lack of control can be was illustrated in some recently released Death Valley figures. At the present 16% yearly increase it is estimated that Death Valley will have 11,000 burros in 10 years.

The present rapid degrading of the environment has resulted from burro herds only doubling. Total destruction of desert eco-systems is certain if herds quadruple as mathematics predicts. Riparian and perennial vegetation will be gone. Total ground disturbance will foster the growth of exotic plants as native flora is replaced. During the exodus, native animals will lead precarious lives ducking all those hooves. Our desert, now a true wasteland, will wind up with hammer-headed, inbred, diseased and starving burro herds. Herds that will peak and die repeatedly in direct response to climatic conditions that either promote or restrict the growth of the remaining annual vegetation.

What the outcome of the wild burro issue will be is anyone's guess. There are completed studies of the problem and more are under way. This can be carried into ridiculous infinity. Several facts have been known for years — Burros are not endangered and there are too many in the American west.

State and Federal burro laws don't seem to be based on scientific fact. Legislators, also, didn't listen very attentively to range and resource managers but carefully considered the letter of a tearful city girl. This is reflected in resulting laws. In public law 92-195, referred to as Wild Horse and Burro act, beautiful nostalgia is expressed "wild free-roaming horses and burros are living symbols of the historic and pioneer spirit of the West" and then continue, by declaring the exotic burro "an integral part of the public lands." In the same section sentiment completely replaces fact, "and that these horses and burros are fast disappearing from the American scene." When the law was written in 1971, wild horse populations were thriving and burros had impacted every area they occupied and were increasing. Preservationists boasted that it was the "children's lobby," their testimony and intensive letter writing campaign that made congress "sit up and listen." These youngsters had been "recruited" from metropolitan areas, many had never even seen a burro. Nevertheless, this influence helped in passing the wild horse and burro act.

"At the present 16% yearly increase it is estimated that Death Valley will have 11,000 burros in 10 years."

What a different turn the burro issue might have taken if conservation educators, too, had enlisted the children.

A real tear-jerking presentation could have been made if on their mission to the classroom they took along a 3 legged horned lizard, a dead baby kangaroo rat and an arm load of wilted desert vegetation.

With these pathetic props dangling before a youthful audience it could be pointed out that the scroungy burro is trampling the cute little critters to death. What's more, with their dirty long yellow teeth they are pulling up all the pretty flowers, they eat some but leave a lot to wither and die. Hee Haw, also has filthy habits and goes to the bathroom in his drinking fountain. So if by chance you were stumbling across the desert with thickening tongue you wouldn't find the cool, clear water you dreamed of. Rather you would have to gag on burro dumpling tea. And so kiddies, the burro's got to go, otherwise there will be no pretty posies or little critters to grace the desert.

With this picture in mind your newly recruited "children's lobby" with a different viewpoint would also have written Congress and the President. They had been pointed in a different direction and so would have asked for burro extermination.

The burro problem is a cause and effect situation. We are attempting to doctor the effect, when instead, we should be performing drastic surgery on the causes. With causes so diverse how do you doctor the resulting confusion? What is prescribed for an environmental issue that turned emotional? While we wait for answers, the noisy minority is getting the attention, the silent majority, who also own the resource, remain silent. Meanwhile resource managers talk to each other, writers write, all hoping for public enlightenment.

Let us hope for it, too; may it arrive soon, before the desert posies and cute little critters have gone the way of the Pony Express.

If you wish to order *Keeper of the Asses* when published, please contact Sierra Life and your name will be forwarded to the author.

Views like this make the hike into this backcountry well worth the effort.

Taking to the High Country

Photo by Jim Beckerle, Cypress, CA

WILDERNESS BACKPACKING — ENJOY THE REWARDS OF A SIERRA EXPERIENCE.

by Hank Levine

My favorite children's story is about a young boy who escapes reality and travels to the land of the wild things. In that land of forest and vines, the boy meets wild beasts that have long claws, nasty eyes, sharp teeth and terrible roars. It isn't long before the boy learns to respect that terrible land and even feel comfortable in it. With a little understanding, some practice and lots of respect, backpacking in a wilderness can also be a comfortable experience you will want to repeat as often as possible.

For your first few trips, rent or borrow as much equipment as possible, but be certain the gear fits you and your needs and that it is not WWII surplus. Backpacks and rucksacks come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Try on different brands and models until you find one that is comfortable for you. Sleeping bags should have a minimum temperature rating slightly lower than the minimum temperature that you expect. Carry a lightweight tent that has either a rain-fly or is made of gore-tex. A sleeping pad of closed-celled foam provides both comfort and insulation from the cold ground.

(continued on next page)

TOP: Parker Creek. Photo by John Stow.
BOTTOM: Little Lakes Valley. Photo by John Stow.

Taking to the High Country *continued*

Take a white gas, kerosene or butane stove with you. Sterno stoves are not hot enough and relying on wood is not an acceptable practice in many areas. It is better to use tennis shoes than boots that don't fit correctly. New boots should be used around town and on short hikes until they are thoroughly broken in. Carry a wind proof and/or waterproof jacket with you as well as gloves and a warm hat.

Taking your household kitchen on a backpacking trip can quickly turn you into a mule. For a group of three, take one stove, a pot, three spoons, bowls and cups. Don't be fooled into buying dehydrated and freeze dried foods found only in backpacking shops. A walk through the aisles of your favorite market will produce a variety of lightweight, dried foods that are both cheap and tasty.

There are eleven items that should always be carried when backpacking. Of course the eleven can easily be stretched to 20 and then 40 and so on. The key to enjoyable backpacking is to have both comfort and warmth, without carrying more than 1/3 of your body weight. The eleven essential items are:

1. Pocket Knife
2. Candle or other fire starter
3. Waterproof matches
4. Compass
5. Extra clothing
6. Sunglasses
7. Map
8. Flashlight
9. Extra food and water
10. First aid kit — include moleskin or second skin for blisters.
11. Toilet paper.

Backpacking shops, bookstores, libraries and Forest Service offices often carry books on beginning backpacking. My favorite book is *"Backpacking: One Step At A Time"* by Harvey Manning.

When planning a trip there are many things to consider. Your first backpacking trip should be short and relatively flat. Don't plan long, steep hikes. Altitude can be a factor in how enjoyable your trip is. As a person progresses to higher altitudes, there is less oxygen available in the atmosphere. After a few days, your body can adjust to this lack of oxygen by producing more oxygen-carrying red blood cells. To help make your first backpack enjoyable, I would recommend a one-way hike of 3 to 4 miles, with less than 400 foot elevation gain per mile, at altitudes below 10,500 feet. As you become more experienced, you will learn what your body can and cannot take. You may find 3 miles and 1,000 foot gain is a good day for you, or you may have masochistic tendencies that force you to hike 25 miles a day. The choice is yours, but build up slowly. A lot of people hike around 4 miles before establishing a base camp. Longer day hikes can be taken from base camp for those with the desire to do so.

All National Forest wilderness and National Park backcountry areas require that you carry a visitor permit. These permits are needed to gather use-data, to pass information on to you and sometimes to limit the number of people entering an area. Write to the nearest National Forest or Park Service office of the area you wish to visit, well in advance of your trip date. Trailhead quotas fill up on many weekends and holidays, so it is an excellent idea to plan trip alternatives. If the entry quota is filled on one trail, you need not be disappointed if you have several trip choices. You absolutely cannot go wrong in the Sierra Nevada. Every trail, every canyon, every lake and every tree is unique and special.

It is a healthy idea always to be in good physical shape, but if city and the nine to five routine get you down, try to get into shape by taking short, day hikes. Running is good training for running, bicycling is good for bicycling and — hiking is excellent conditioning for backpacking.

When you go backpacking, arrive at

(continued on next page)

ENDANGERED SPECIES

by Aim Morhardt

INTERVIEW : PHIL PISTER

Dept. of Fish and Game Biologist

Mr. Pister is a dedicated conservationist whose present position has brought him into intimate contact with the endangered fishes not only in the Death Valley region but throughout the entire Great Basin area. He has been Chairman of the Desert Fishes Council and is a recognized authority in his field. Sierra Life's first question to him was regarding popular misconceptions about 'pupfish' as they have been presented in the press. Is this like the snail-darter of Tennessee Valley Authority fame where only one species was involved or has it greater dimensions, as the term Desert Fishes Council might suggest?

Phil told us the D.F.C. numbered in excess of four hundred persons and comprised a nationwide and international representation of federal, state and university scientists and resource specialists, members of conservation organizations, and individuals concerned with long-term environmental values. The area involved is large, ranging from the Wasatch Mountains on the east to the Sierra Nevada on the west, and from the Snake River Plateau on the north to the deserts of Mexico. It spans not one but hundreds of species belonging to numerous families. Some are already listed as endangered. Virtually all will eventually be endangered if current development of desert areas is not curtailed.

As Phil explained it, the Great Basin slowly dried up after the last ice age, leaving a large and diverse population of fishes which has become more and more segregated as time has elapsed until now some habitats are no larger than a single spring. This desiccation has led to speciation in the same way that Darwin found it earlier on the Galapagos Islands, where, among other biota the finch population, isolated on separate islands, developed considerable diversity due to differences, however subtle, in their environments. Here in the Great Basin the pattern is reversed and we find spots of water in a vast desert, yet the same thing has happened. Each tiny habitat produces its own variation, whether it be pupfish, chub, cutthroat trout or squawfish. Almost all face the same dangers of encroachment and need protection.

We asked him to comment on the present status of attempts to reintroduce species into safer habitats close by or,

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YE OLDE STANDBY (CHICKEN POT PIE)

by Valerie J. Naso

1 stewing chicken - 4 to 5 lbs. - cut up
1 small onion
3 sprigs parsley
2 tsps. salt
3 peppercorns
1 bay leaf

Stew 3 hours in a 4 qt. kettle, covered with 1 qt. boiling water. Remove meat from bones, cut in small pieces, set aside. Strain and cool broth, remove fat, set aside in pot.

4 potatoes, peeled and cut in pieces
4 carrots, peeled and cut in pieces
3 stalks celery, cut up
2 small onions, chopped
fresh or frozen peas
1/4 to 1/2 tsp. salt
white pepper
Bisquick biscuit dough

Bring reserved broth to boil. Add vegetables, salt and pepper, cook 20 minutes. Remove vegetables and place in 2 qt. casserole with chicken. Add 1/2 cup water (or milk) mixed with 1/4 cup flour to the broth. Cook 5 minutes. Pour over casserole, top with biscuit dough. Bake at 425 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes.

Do not cheat and buy a frozen pot pie.

COUNTRY SKILLET STEW

by Valerie J. Naso

2 Tbs. shortening
2 large yellow onions, finely sliced
flour, salt and pepper to dredge meat
2 lbs. veal or beef, cubed
3 ripe tomatoes, sliced
5 potatoes, peeled and quartered
dash cinnamon
pinch nutmeg

Melt shortening in heavy skillet, add onions and cook until golden. Dredge meat in flour, salt and pepper. Add to onions and cook until brown. Add tomatoes, cinnamon and nutmeg, cover skillet and cook slowly about 20 minutes. Add potatoes and simmer **slowly** until done. Add salt to taste. Anything else you wish to throw in should go with the potatoes. Serves 4 famished people or 6 hungry people.

COLD APPLE SOUP

by Valerie J. Naso

8 ozs. plain or vanilla yogurt
1 apple peeled and sliced
3 ozs. apple juice

Put all in blender and puree. Chill several hours.

the trailhead early in the evening. A good night's sleep at as high an altitude as you can drive to, will help allow your body to relax after a long drive and help it adjust to less oxygen. For people who already live in or around the mountains, there is no need to camp 20 miles from home; just make sure not to party or stay up late the night before your trip.

Most trails are easy to follow. Don't be afraid to look around while hiking. I find that if I am walking directly behind another backpacker the only thing I see is their boots. Instead, I find it more enjoyable to walk slightly separated, regrouping for rest breaks or to point out some fascinating object or sight. Maintained trails are only hard to follow when they cross creeks or rock slabs. When you approach one of these areas, look ahead of you to where the trail starts again. By doing this there is no need to build small rock stacks (also known as ducks) along the trail. Most backpackers find ducks an eye irritant. When crossing a creek, remove your waist-belt and plan ahead. A continuous motion is more stable than moving one step at a time. Look ahead one to two steps, instead of at your feet. It's like driving a car.

When hiking up a trail, you will encounter 180° turns known as switchbacks. You will also encounter switchbacks that people have avoided by hiking down between the corners. Cutting switchbacks saves little time, is more likely to result in sprained ankles and actually ruins the trail. Trails are built to a minimum grade, thus reducing muscle strain and erosional problems. When people cut switchbacks, gullies are formed which water will flow down. The end result is a gully that washes out the trail. Trail building is a costly business, so please don't cut switchbacks.

Stock use is a traditional method of travel in the mountains. If you encounter stock while hiking, safety mandates that you give them the right-of-way. Ask the packer if he wants you to stand uphill or downhill from the packtrain. Move at least 4 feet off the trail and stand still. If you are hiking faster than the stock and wish to pass them let the packer know, but don't tailgate the last mule or horse. Pack animals can kick faster than you can react.

When you arrive at your destination, locate your campsite off the trail, out of view of other camps, in a previously used area. The riparian environment found between land and water and meadows is fragile. Camping at least 100 feet from these areas can save them from being trampled. It is a good idea to purify all water by boiling it for three minutes, because traces of mammalian waste, including human, finds its way into lakes and rivers. Not many people get sick from drinking Sierra Nevada waters, but why take a chance?

Campfires are not allowed in many backcountry areas. This restriction was needed for several reasons. Campfire rings have become trash cans for foil and plastic which does not burn. After all the wood is taken from the ground, people begin to strip trees, both living and dead. Trees near popular campsites all have browse lines as high as a person can reach. There is also a theory that the younger trees will show signs of stunted growth, because there is not enough decomposing wood left on the ground

(continued on next page)

Cutting switchbacks saves little time, is more likely to result in sprained ankles and actually ruins the trail.

to provide the necessary nutrients for a tall, healthy forest. If you feel the need to have a campfire, make certain that it is in a legal area and that you take the wood from the ground.

On the last day of your trip, try to leave your campsite cleaner than you found it. Carry out, don't bury non burnable trash.

No matter how strong minded you are, there always comes a time when you must answer nature's call. This shouldn't cause a big trauma. Relax. If you are with a big group or planning on using a basecamp for an extended period of time, build a latrine. Make sure the latrine has a good view. If you choose not to build a latrine, use a plastic spade or rock to dig a hole 6 to 9 inches deep. Whether you build a communal hole or not, make sure that you are more than 150 feet from the nearest water and well away from campsites and trails.

Thunder and frontal storms do occur in the Sierra Nevada. Besides producing precipitation, storms offer magnificent photographic opportunities, fresh smells and act as natural crowd controllers. Don't let bad weather, particularly thunderstorms, chase you out of the mountains. Carry rain gear with you and if it does rain, set up your tent and wait out the storm. Thunderstorms usually last less than 6 hours and seldom start until early afternoon.

Never underestimate the danger of a lightning storm. Get in a low spot when the storm is close and stay there until it passes.

The wildest, most dangerous animal in the Sierra Nevada is the mosquito.

Mosquitos start appearing in late June and usually persist through mid-August. There are various types of mosquito repellents available on the market. Jungle Juice, developed for use in Vietnam, and Muskol are the best repellents currently available. Although the mosquito is the fiercest animal in the Sierra Nevada, all animals are wild and therefore unpredictable. The only two animal related deaths in Yosemite National Park have been the result of people feeding deer. There is a great variety of animals in the Sierra Nevada - all of them should be observed from a safe distance.

I have it from the authorities that 1982 is a good year to start backpacking. Read some introductory backpacking books, contact an outdoor club or organization or ask your friends to take you on a backpack. Don't forget to take the kids. Let the youngest children carry their own jacket. As they get older, they can carry all of their clothes and eventually their sleeping bags. Don't overload them, spend lots of time around basecamp fishing and taking short walks.

Backpacking is like anything else — the more you practice, the easier it becomes. It is only natural to over or underestimate how much gear, food or energy you will actually use on your first few trips. Don't get frustrated. Understanding wilderness ethics will result in a safer, more enjoyable trip. Respect the wilderness. We are visitors only and therefore should be on our best behavior. The forces of nature are more powerful than the forces of mankind. Enjoy yourself. •

The wildest, most dangerous animal in the Sierra Nevada is the mosquito.

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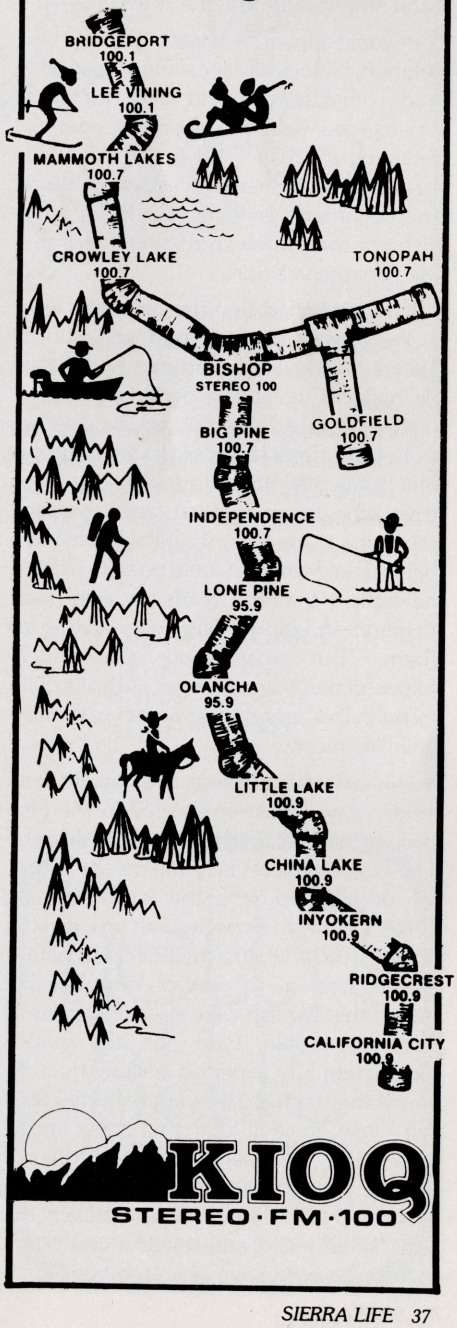

Endangered Species *continued*

failing that, employ the 'zoo' concept as it might pertain to desert fishes.

His reply was that it had been attempted in everything from the finest aquaria to specially constructed habitats elsewhere but without avail. He mentioned one built at a selected spot below Hoover Dam, to imitate as closely as possible the environment of Cyprinoden diabolis, the Devil's Hole pupfish, and how all died upon transfer. In other cases, although the imported fishes lived they might not breed or shortly mutated to fit their new surroundings and became something quite different, such repeated trials demonstrating that there are subtleties involved which we cannot produce artificially. A rough analogy would be the return of the salmon to its same riffle on its natal stream and to none other.

It would appear, he stated, that the best solution, biologically speaking, would be to trade other government lands for those endangered habitats wherever possible, including acreage adversely affecting stream flow, for in many cases agricultural encroachment is reflected from some distance away in lowered water tables as in the Amargosa Basin.

We mentioned that the problems went well beyond the biological and shortly became socio-political in nature. He said he realized that the general background rested on greed and quoted me another from Paul Ehrlich's book *Extinction,* this one of the man about to take a long plane trip, who happened to see someone removing rivets from the plane's wing. On being asked why he would do such a thing, he replied that the rivets were in great demand and he got fifty cents apiece for them. "But what about the plane?" expostulated the passenger. "Oh, it's quite all right. I've been doing this for years and it still flies nicely."

We asked him about the current land trade now almost completed in the Fish Slough area north of Bishop. He told us he feels its passage is likely and that it will now be possible to save the few remaining Owens pupfish, a species first noted in the middle 1850's when a member of a military group, sent in to control local Indians, noted that the fish were so abundant as to form a staple food for the native population. In a period of less than 50 years they came to the verge of extinction. So close, in fact, that the single spring where they were segregated went dry in a recent drought and the few remaining Owens pupfish were retrieved from the slowly hardening mud only a few hours before it would have been too late.

Typical of the trials faced by his department in this particular area has been the introduction, sub rosa, of bass into their newly fenced preserve, a sure way to kill the few remaining pupfish. This last was thwarted at some cost and labor by trapping the pupfish selectively and then removing the bass by other means. This problem of introduction of 'exotic' fish, which all prey on the local species, is widespread and difficult to control.

Lastly, we asked Mr. Pister if he thought there was any middle ground between the demands of a rapidly growing population and any sort of preservation, not only of desert fishes but of any animal in any niche in any part of the globe. He referred us to his foreword in The Eleventh Annual Symposium of The Desert Fishes Council held in Death Valley, November 15 - 17, 1979, which he gave us permission to quote from.

"During the past decade we have learned that eternal vigilance is the price of preservation, and that for every threat successfully encountered and resolved, seemingly a dozen more arise to take its place. However, we have also learned that there are ways within "the system" to preserve the priceless biological treasures that we have identified and learned to appreciate early enough to be able to preserve them. Hopefully, we can continue to hold the line until society embraces these same values and recognizes that their preservation comprises not a threat to sound economic development, but actually a logical and necessary precedent to the preservation of the same systems that support man.

"Hopefully, the sound biological research and accompanying preservation programs fostered by the Council, and the successes engendered thereby, will serve as a beacon to those who might otherwise become discouraged as expanding populations in the Southwest would appear destined to utilize every drop of desert water and every acre of level land. It is indeed paradoxical that man, although technologically capable of attaining virtually any goal he sets his mind to, somehow cannot achieve the degree of humility necessary to accept the profound truth expressed by the prophet Isaiah over four thousand years ago:

"Woe unto them that join house to house, that lay field to field, till there be no place, that they be placed alone in the midst of the earth. (Isaiah 5:8)

"Perhaps our efforts will help man to understand that concept before he finds himself adrift in a lifeboat with all of his supplies gone."•

Lace Curtains *continued*

given a tray full of keys and for three weekends I tried to open a door on the second floor hall that was dead-bolted. Finally I got so frustrated I raised my foot and kicked it down. It fell without a peep; it had never really been in place. After that, I knew I was in for some surprises." The chandeliers in the second floor hall have no switch and no amount of searching has turned up one. Trish now leaves them burning with an 11 watt bulb in each. The light switch for the kitchen is located next door in the gift shop, and when water is run in the bar it goes down a pipe that runs through the shop, causing people to wonder where the noise is coming from.

The old banquet room upstairs has been divided into hotel rooms, the only ones downtown since the closing of the Silver Dollar. Trish hopes to do them in country decor and to have a bridal suite with a four-poster bed.

"We've had people ask how come the sun comes up in both windows at once". . . "We tell them it's our magical room."

"We've had people ask how come the sun comes up in both windows at once," she said. "We tell them it's our magical room." There is no other explanation, as the windows face east and west.

There are the well known names: The Bucket of Blood Saloon with the collection of silver horseshoes, The Silver Queen, The Old Washoe Club and the Delta Saloon with the famous suicide table. The Delta also houses the original 1864 vault of the Bank of California. It was robbed in 1927 and the money is said to be hidden somewhere in Six Mile Canyon.

The Mark Twain Museum has a fine collection of model trains and a fire engine that was parked for several years at Gold Hill with the message "Happy Birthday" painted on its hood.

Continued on next page . . .

Lace Curtains *continued*

It originally came from Bishop, California and is to be restored by the Virginia City fire department.

One of the most interesting museums is Grant's, a complete turn of the century general store that was put together through the efforts of 19 separate collectors.

There is a great deal of talent and energy in town. Art classes are held every summer at St. Mary's Art Center in the old St. Mary's Hospital. Students come from all over to participate. A sculptress lives in town, as does the head of the art department of the University of Nevada in Reno. It is where artists and writers find their niche. The late Walter Van Tilburg Clark, one of America's finest novelists, lived there for the expansive vistas, the unquenchable pioneer spirit and the freedom to be companionable or to enjoy the solitude.

"To really know Virginia City, one has to see it the way the statue of justice does from the Storey County Courthouse — unblindfolded and prepared to see past the obvious."

To really know Virginia City, one has to see it the way the statue of justice does from the Storey County Courthouse — unblindfolded and prepared to see past the obvious. The Comstock Motel at the south end of town is an excellent place to stay. The Visitor's Bureau runs a 15 minute film and will answer all your questions. But to find out what's really going on in town go to the post office and see what events are posted on the front door. On one Friday in November there was an open house at St. Mary's in the Mountains, the annual Firemen's Ball, a local craft show and a wine tasting party sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce.

Margaret Marks said, "This town was really something else." It still is.•

NOTE: For reservations at the Gold Hill Hotel, Telephone (702) 847-0111 or (702) 588-4825.

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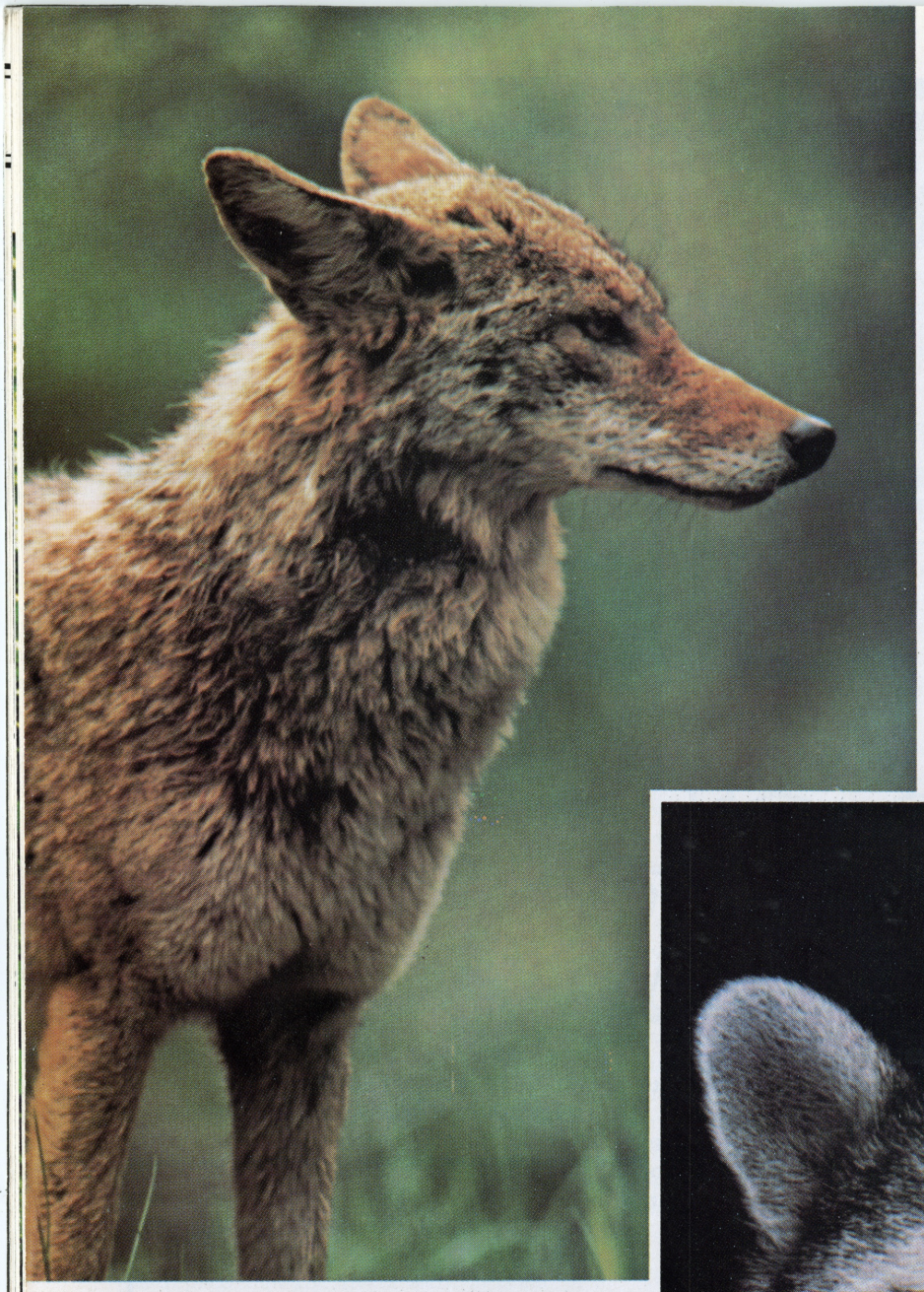
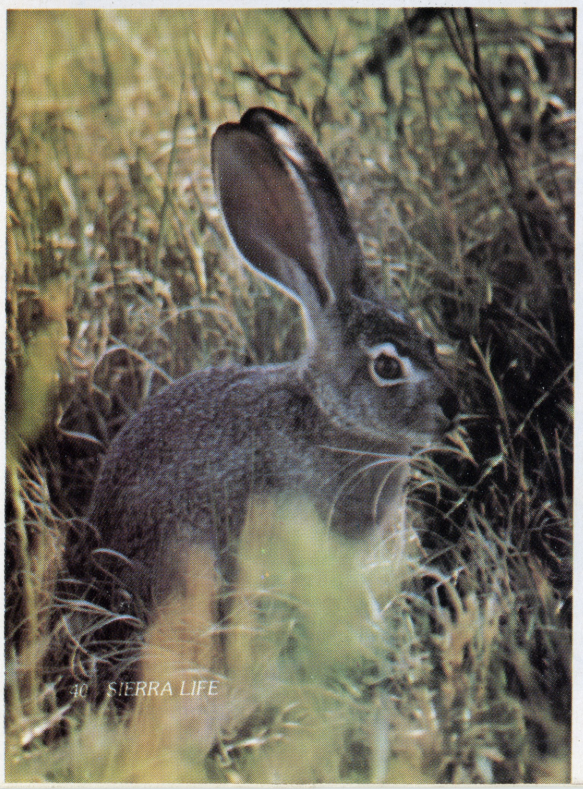


SIERRA

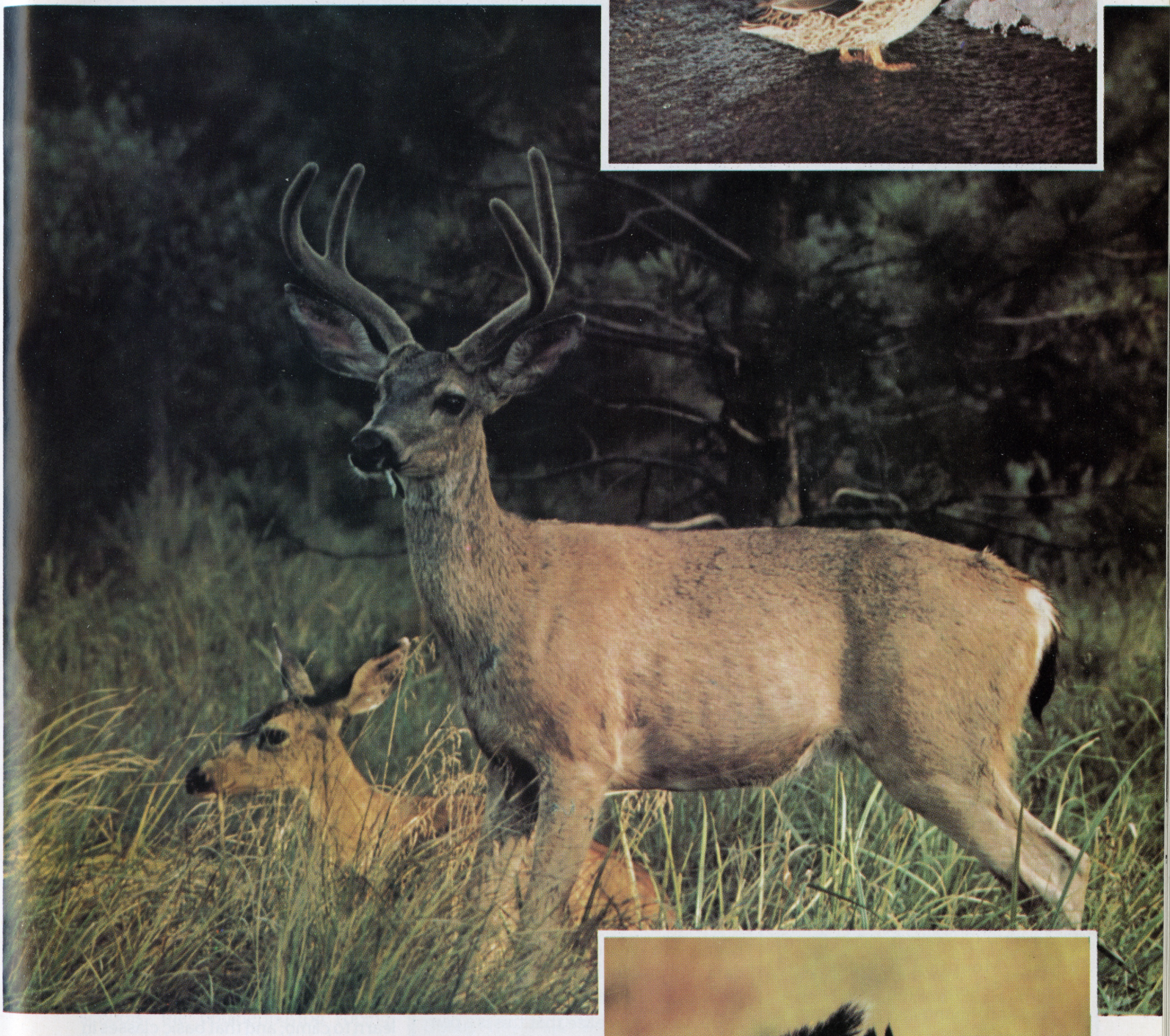
A Pictorial by Patty Van Dolson
Sierra Life Chief Photographer

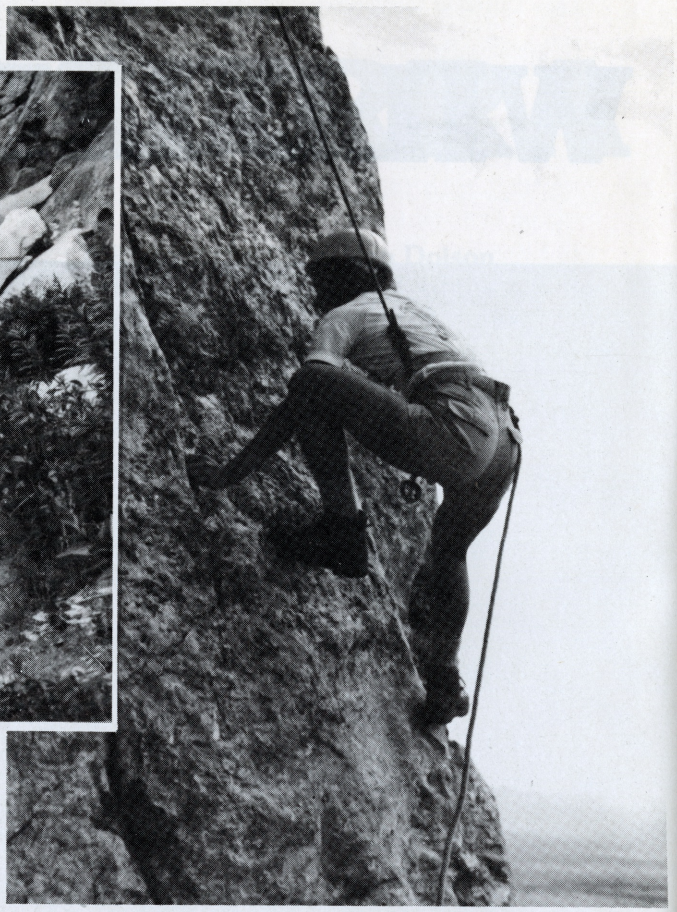
Wild in a morning meadow,
soft as Sierra spring —
the innocent ones of the mountains
ask only their scheduled existence.
Breath softly, step lightly and share
the peace of a delicate fear.

J.F.



WILD LIFE





High Country Family Recreation

by Jane Fisher

Does mountain climbing suggest towering, icy peaks, glaciers, invincible supermen who live dangerously close to the limit of life? Do you think in terms of couloirs and hidden cols, ice climbs, buttresses, Grade VI climbs, 5.9, pinnacles, columns, faces and overhangs?

Jean Satterfield has a different idea. She is a business woman, dainty and elegant. Her business is called Sierra Summit Mountain Guides and Climbing School, and her idea is climbing and mountaineering as family recreation.

Chuck Satterfield is Chief Guide. He came to Mammoth from the Grand Teton National Park, where he was an avalanche expert, instructor and guide for Exum Mountain Guide Service, the oldest mountaineering class in the country.

Chuck's job is to make sure Sierra Summit guides know all about handling groups on a rope, single clients, advanced first aid or EMT, and have some other field of expertise, as well as being accomplished climbers. He also takes an active role in the teaching. If he sounds like a teacher, it's only because he is, having an M.S. in Natural Science from the University of Wyoming, and having been admitted to the PhD program at Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, B.C. He submitted his thesis in 1971, on a correlation of twenty-five years of meteorological data and avalanches. Besides all that, he is a certified ski instructor.

By now you realize that this is a pair of dynamic people, who want to share their talents and love of the high land with other families. Family is the focus, although there are mountaineering classes, guide services, and climbing classes for everyone from the nine year old adventurer with a parent, to the individual expert climber.

Jean started climbing in the Grand Tetons, where Chuck was an instructor.

"I was impressed," she says. "I thought, if Wyoming, why not California, especially Mammoth?" She must have been impressed with Chuck, too, because they married and she brought him back to her country.

With the encouragement of the community, Jean opened her business. While there are two other climbing schools in the Eastern Sierra, she feels they are not in competition because of the entirely different family oriented curriculum. She believes that mountaineering is an invigorating family sport, that almost anyone can learn to climb, and that basic classes in backpacking, mountaineering, climbing and snow travel will increase the safety and expand the enjoyment of people who want to visit the mountains.

The Satterfield's children all climb, and Jean tells little anecdotes about

(continued on next page)

their initial reluctance and increasing enthusiasm for the challenge.

Challenge isn't all a guided experience offers. Besides having had adventures worth the yarn-spinning, each of their carefully selected guides has a second expertise in some aspect of the total outdoor circumstance, astronomy, natural sciences, photography, skiing, search and rescue. Perhaps Chuck's work with experiential education — dealing with the whole person, not just fundamentals — has been operating here.

The aim of Sierra Summit is to teach safety, climbing ability and self-confidence. "You would be able to hike up say, to Clyde Minaret," Jean explains, "But if you decided you wanted to climb the Minaret, too, you could do that. You would know how to take care of yourself, how to avoid hypothermia, safety in lightning storms, and all the rest."

"We pride ourselves on the diversity of our people," adds Chuck, "so instead of just a mountain climbing lesson, you have a really full experience."

Jean, who plays a larger part in the advertising and arranging of the schools, says that private instruction is available, and a particular guide can be requested. Guides work on a rotational basis throughout the school and the climbs. Jean and Chuck feel it is extremely important for all guides to be able to work with complete novices, as well as with experienced mountaineers.

A lot of our business is generated because of the relationships between clients and guides, so we want guides who are interesting, and can answer a lot of questions on a variety of subjects," Jean explains.

You can learn more about the basic, intermediate, advanced, and snow schools, the bouldering/top roping, the guided one- or two-day climbs in the colorful Mammoth region, and the special seminars in the Sierra, Mt. Whitney, and the Tetons, by sending for a brochure from Sierra Summit Mountain Guides and Climbing School, P.O. Box 7345, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546.•

Sierra "Happenings"

Don't miss these great events!

Here in the Sierra, we really know how to have a good time! If you are a skeptic, just join us for a rip roaring good time at the 50th Homecoming celebration in Bishop or the fantastic Sierra Summer Festival in Mammoth, and we'll prove it to you!

BISHOP HOMECOMING THE 50th YEAR

This year, over the Labor Day weekend, Bishop will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its Homecoming observance.

Originated in the early 1930's when so many ranchers, landowners and businessmen had to move away when the City of Los Angeles was purchasing land and water rights, the nostalgic return continues to expand.

The founders wanted to provide an event to bring together old friends. Local businessmen and the City Council put up the cash to get the celebration under way with a rodeo, demonstrations of wrestling, boxing grudge matches, games, races and street sports, including a tug-of-war.

In 1937 the committee incorporated as the Bishop Homecoming and Labor Day Association, and the idea of a Homecoming Queen was born.

This year the kick-off barbeque announced the parade theme, "Days Gone By," signaled GO for the whiskerino contest, and introduced the Queen contestants on Saturday, June 12.

The week before festivities officially begin, western dress is appropriate and predominates. In fact, on parade day, no whiskers or western dress may call for certain persons to be paraded in the Kangaroo Jail.

This year's celebration starts Friday, September 4, with the crowning of a Homecoming Queen at a dance. The parade starts down Main Street at 11 a.m. on Saturday. The rest of the Saturday activities take place at the Tri-County Fairground, with a gymkhana, barbeque, professional rodeo and dance.

Sunday morning starts with the famous Lions Club Pancake Breakfast at the Bishop City Park. In the cool of late afternoon, the Old-Timers Picnic is held there, too. Then it's back to the Fairground for another professional rodeo and another dance.

Monday concludes the celebration with the popular local rodeo. A new addition for 1982 will be a Horseshoe Tournament.

Souvenirs of the Big 50th will be a limited number of specially designed, first edition belt buckles.

"And so," the committee proclaims, "the Eastern Sierra continues to exert its nostalgic pull on the old-timers who left so long ago. The annual Homecoming celebration brings many of them back each year, as well as providing local residents and the area's many visitors a fun-filled Labor Day weekend."

For further information, contact the Bishop Chamber of Commerce (714) 873-8405/690 N. Main Street/Bishop, Ca

SIERRA SUMMER FESTIVAL THE 5th SEASON

Five years ago, Mammoth people launched the Sierra Summer Festival for the performing arts, to provide a festival in a glorious setting with the potential for cultural growth. The festival has maintained artistic excellence and draws an audience from throughout California. After four successful seasons, the fifth promises to be one of the best!

Spanning three weekends and two mid-weeks from July 23rd. through August 8th. this year, the Sierra Summer Festival will present evenings of concerts, dance and plays and numerous daytime workshops in native indian crafts, dance, music, painting and poetry.

World famous artists and groups such as Ambrosia, Donna Fargo, Pablo Cruise, Bogidar Avramov and the Westside Symphony Orchestra, Poco, Rain, Sweet Comfort, Leon Pattillo, Richie Fuhre, Tom Johnston, Three Dog Night, L.A. Jazz Choir, and the LTD Dance Unlimited will appear this year. The musical play, Ishi, a story of the last of a wild tribe of Sierra indians, will feature local talent in choir and on instruments. Day of the Child, a program for children of all ages will be featured during the festival.

The mood of the festival is light and informal. Outdoor concerts attract scores of people who bring picnic dinners to enjoy while stretching out on blankets to watch the shows under the stars. Last year over 30,000 people attended the concerts and workshops.

The festival committee extends an invitation to all to come to Mammoth Lakes and enjoy the festival as well as the wide range of summer activities in the High Sierra. For information write to: Sierra Summer Festival/Post Office Box 7710 in Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546.

The Cabin Bar . . .
an American experience

Buck Bills, Gene Dinkins, Buck Elton, Buck Elton, Sr., seated, Dr. Smart, local vet, John Lacy neighboring rancher.

The opportunity still exists to live on a working cattle ranch, in the atmosphere of turn-of-the-century Old West, yet be pampered with the amenities of modern technology.

The Cabin Bar Ranch is an oasis on the shores of a vast dry lake, with clear desert vistas sloping off to the west across meadows that creep farther each year into the old lake bed. On the east, the Sierra escarpment rises abruptly to golden Olancha Peak and the steep canyons that dash water down in precipitous falls and funnel the trails that lead cattle up to backcountry grazing grounds.

Cabin Bar is the original brand of the pioneer Lubken family. The ranch was once an Indian campsite.

A limited number of families will live in luxurious lodges on lots of more than an acre each, with individual trout ponds and rock-lined streams, a helicopter pad at the front gate, and shares in their own utility company. They will participate in real ranching, including the sport, fun and family atmosphere, as well as the hard work of round-ups and drives. They will enjoy a swimming pool, tennis court, picnic areas, a working rodeo arena, trap and skeet range, and a trout-stocked lake down in the meadows bordering the old lake bed.

(continued on next page)

by Jane Fisher

Cattle drive through the high country.

Located 170 miles north of Los Angeles on Highway 395, the main route to Bishop, Mammoth Lakes and the High Sierra, the ranch's 595,000 acres spread from desert to meadows at 11,000 feet, larger in size than all of Orange County. The area nearby offers hunting, hiking, fishing for the fabled Golden Trout, camping, exploring for artifacts, and a short drive to winter sports centers at Mammoth and June Mountains. Prized above all else, though, are the quiet days, clean air, sweet water, and the chance to slow down and be family.

All this and more is the dream of Richard S. Stevens and the Albert M. Elton's, Buck Sr. and Buck Jr., partners in the Cabin Bar Ranch.

Stevens is President of Wrather Properties Development, Inc., including the Disneyland Hotel and the Inn at the Park in Anaheim, the Queen Mary in Long Beach, and developers of the new Marina City in Marina del Rey. He is Vice President and member of the Board of Wrather Corporation (AMEX), a company active in oil and gas, entertainment properties such as Lassie and the Lone Ranger, real estate and cable television. He is a native Californian, a former Army officer, and his many roles and honors have led *Executive Magazine* to call him "one of the nation's leading executives."

(continued on next page)

Lori Stevens

The Elton's have been partners in the Cabin Bar since 1972. Both are former Army officers, skilled cattle ranchers and have formed the High Sierra Springs, a company producing bottled water, trucked out in tankers and sold under a private label to Safeway. Buck Sr. is listed in the *Marquis Who's Who, Community Leaders and Noteworthy Americans,* and the *Dictionary of International Biography.*Buck Jr. left his job as Army Captain piloting helicopters, to manage the ranch operation for his father in 1972. Stevens bought out the Elton's former partner, Thornburg, in 1975.

The Owens Valley, where the Cabin Bar's home base lies, has been settled so recently that much of its history still lies on top of the ground and some of the oldtimers who still tell their stories of pride, adventure, Indians, water wars, winters, mountaineering and ranching, are the very grandchildren of the first white people to come to California.

Covered wagons came in 1861 and people settled in the fertile green river and stream regions. Silver and gold discoveries and the usurpation of Indian lands caused turbulence familiar in California history. After 1865, things were fairly peaceful, and the Owens Valley became a prosperous agricultural supplier for the busy mines of eastern California and Nevada. In 1903, the U.S. Reclamation Service proposed a water project for the area. Convinced by one of their engineers, who soon was employed by the City of Los Angeles, that growth of that city was a higher and better use, they abandoned the project, and from then on the fate of Owens Valley has been determined by the policies of the Department of Water and Power of Los Angeles.

Little Cartago, next to the north boundary of the Cabin Bar Ranch, was the terminus of the Bessie Brady, a steamer which carried silver bullion from the mines in the Inyo Mountains on the east, to the wagon trains waiting to transport it to Los Angeles. The Bessie Brady doubled as excursion boat in the days before the drying of Owens Lake. The actual landing site is noted by an historical marker right in the middle of the Cabin Bar parting field, just 100 yards from the southeast corner of the new development. A local sport is still the hope that a brisk spring wind will uncover an old wagon wheel in the lake bed, or even a silver bar, or some beautiful arrowheads.

Cabin Bar is the original brand of the pioneer Lubken family. The ranch was once an Indian campsite. Buck Jr. tells how the Indians would come to sit by the springs to fast and meditate, even recently.

There are sixteen springs that flow from an old fault line running along the base of the Sierra. Water will be abundant on the ranch as long as winter comes yearly to the Sierra Range. Besides the springs and a reservoir stocked with bass and catfish, Cabin Bar owns the upper seventeen thirty-seconds of Cartago Creek. Inyo County and the State of California have approved a $2,000,000 industrial bond to put in a water company that will serve the new homes and the bottled water for Southern California. "We are also considering piping Cartago Creek down and building a hydro system to furnish our own electricity," says Buck Jr. "To make it today, you have to

(continued on next page)

Cabin Bar *continued*

develop your own resources. We expect to be a completely self-sustaining operation."

The home base has a resident ghost. Convinced that he is the friendly spirit of Art Lubken, Chris, Buck Jr.'s trim and pretty wife, tells about him. "We call him Artie. Artie was always interested in what was going on, even after he sold the ranch. He uses the old entrance, comes daytime or night time. Everyone has seen him. He moves things around, but if you holler at him, he knocks it off and goes to the door and makes noises. We are casual about it, but it makes other people nervous."

"He wanders around the place," Buck adds. "You can feel him around at night, but if you say, 'Everything's o.k., Artie,' you can feel him go away. He was very restless when we first moved in, but he's better now."

Chris and Buck Jr. were married young, have three teenagers and still look scarcely old enough to have parented the youngest. Bucky, Tasha and Danielle are honor society students, student body presidents, cheer leaders, and totally involved in school and community. They are all close, extremely family oriented. "This life leads to the only lifestyle that can still keep a family together," Buck declares. "We spend the summer, the five of us, in the Sierra in Little Whitney cow camp. It's a wonderful experience."

The Cabin Bar is one of the few ranches left in the United States still operating on the pioneer principle; they use no supplemental feedings, drive cattle, nose to tail, 6,000 to 10,000 feet up narrow gorges to summer in mountain meadows. They are proud of the stock Buck Jr. has been building up.

While we discuss the operation, ranch life goes on about us. Three hundred head were just brought in for branding and parting, and soon will be taken up to the high grazing grounds. Buck's mother has just left after cooking half the night for the hands, who are her extended family. Buck Jr. is the oldest of nine children who, with their in-laws and assorted relatives, participate in the work sessions. One of the men drops by.

"I'm going into town. Wondered if you needed anything?"

And another. "Weren't you going on fence today?" asks Buck.

"I'm done. Going into town on the cooler. I have a parent conference at six and want to get back. Do you guys need anything in town?" Every member of the Elton family gets as involved as possible in all that keeps family, land and community firmly founded.

"When you start involving yourself with the land and understand what it was like a hundred years ago," Buck Jr. tells us, "it tries your mind, your body, and ties family together. Owens Valley is one of the prettiest, most untouched places. I think our lifestyle is the best of the best. I was talking to a man a few years ago who believed the Sierra is a vortex of energy, one of the four or five around the world that is a safe area if you love the land."

"So how can you justify a development here?" I asked, in my role of prickly oldtimer.

"We are only selling 17 acres, 14 lots. People who come here will be like us, will become like us, will love this beautiful, beautiful country, its healthy lifestyle. It's not the money. I want to expose people to this kind of life because we need them to understand

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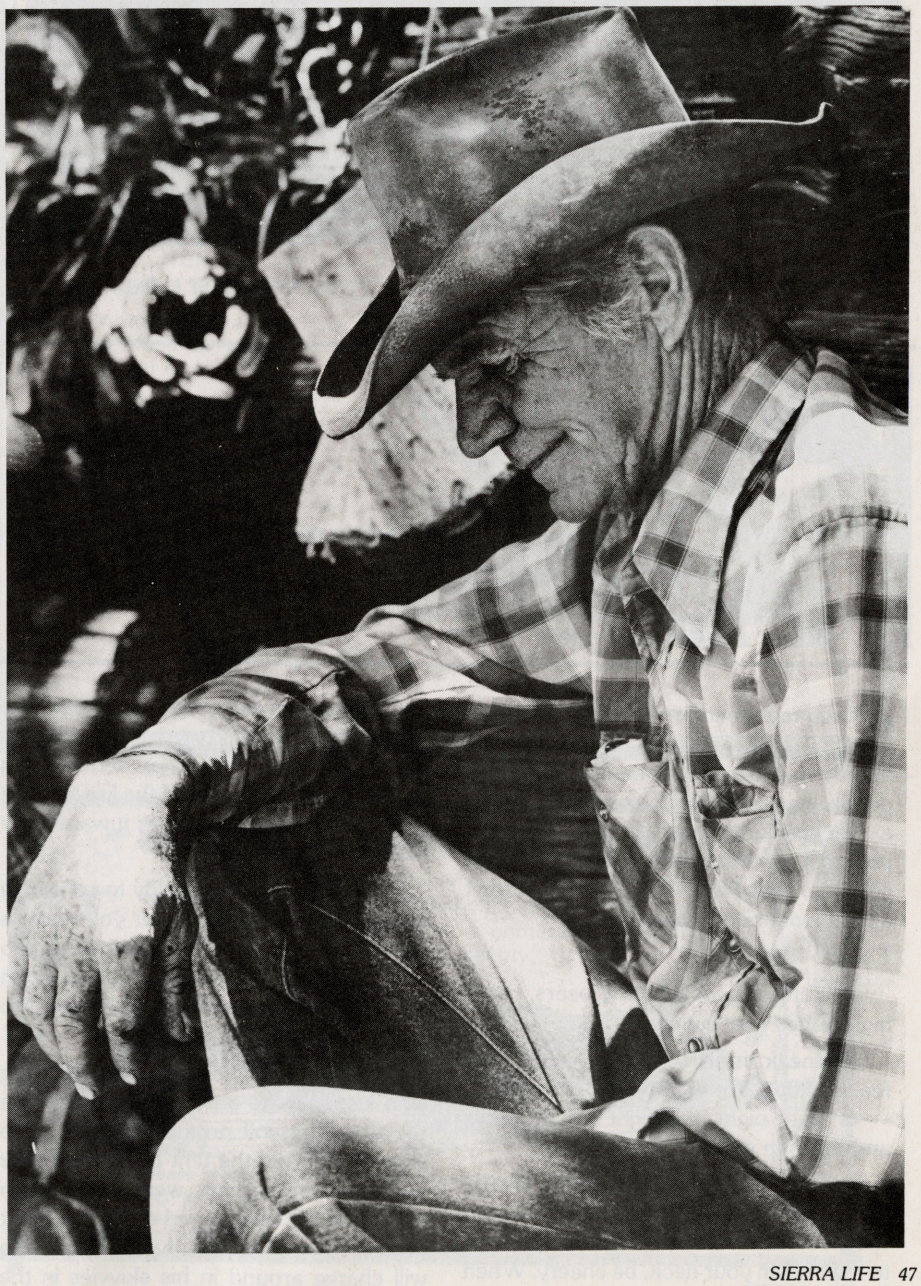
Roy Hunter, neighboring rancher



The high country is a beautiful place — if you know the rules.

From the Diary of a Country Woman

by Jane Fisher

When my friend and companion gets a certain far-away look in his eye, pipe in mouth, topo maps in hand, and battle debris all over the den, I know we are in for a backpacking trip. Faced with the prospect of certain terror, I start making little lists. They are sorted into Do, Don't and Uncommon Prayers.

The Do List:

(1) Watch out for lightning, bears, snow, high places and the dark.

(2) Sneak into pack: lemon drops for tea, brandy for hot chocolate, paperbacks — one per night, flashlight and batteries and bulbs in same ratio.

(3) Be a cheerful companion. When the sun turns the dew to silver and the aspen to gold and causes the icicles on your tent to melt down your neck, be cheery. When you planned an early start to get over the pass before dark, and you have to wait two and a half hours for the tent and sleeping bags to thaw and dry, and the fire smokes for forty-five minutes before it warms the coffee, smile.

(4) Encourage your buddy to go fishing alone and stay awhile. After you reach a certain age, no lipstick, creams, shampoo or contact lenses do not add up to virgin beauty. You need a little time to perform those little miracles.

(5) Take along friends, especially those who just seem to attract adventure. Like the time the wolf prompted six of us to sleep in the car, the tent collapsed in the wind, the hot springs went dry at bath time, and the bear joined us on the West Walker River. It's nice to have a friend who will charge around in his skivvies in the dark and shout obscenities calculated to offend bears, if your darling is disposed toward the sleep of the courageous and unconscious.

(6) Get to your pack first if a bear mangles it, and kick it into the river. Otherwise, there are certain types of men who, no matter how many years you have spent liberating them, will stitch up the filthy thing with string, load it with your share of the gear, and expect you to carry it.

The Don't List:

(1) Don't expect help from the watch dog. When the bears dropped by, our friends' intrepid guard quaked at the bottom of Maggie's sleeping bag. Inside.

(2) Don't be a bum sport. On the first night of a fifteen day trip, I'm inclined to fling myself into the tent, slide hysterically to the depths of the sleeping bag and shout, "Fifteen days is too long. I'm going home tomorrow," as I snivel into the zipper of my folded-jacket pillow. DON'T. Remember (a) the only time you get coffee in bed is in the mountains; (b) how sheepish you feel in the morning, when the sweet smell of pine smoke drifts in , your patient playmate hands you a cup of steaming coffee and asks you which way you are going. That sickly smile and thumb-jerk toward "up" is unbecoming.

(3) Don't keep the flashlight going all night in lieu of street lights. Nothing is going to come after you out of the woods. (Don't you believe it.)

(4) Don't take soap. Hiking through the rich, black, powdery soil of the gentle wilderness and sitting around rich, black, smokey night fires results in rich, black, smelly hikers. The logistics of cleaning clothes and body without polluting stream, exposing naked person on busy John Muir Trail, sousing tent, or putting clean clothing on dirty body and vice versa, boggles the mind.

After 112 trips to stream and 100 feet away from stream to dump soapy water, at least ten naked dashes behind rocks, and extraction of seven pine needles from bare feet, the impossible was conquered. Whereupon I looked up and saw my companion, in full suds, washing placidly and soapily in the stream. Don't take soap. Icy and refreshing baths will congeal the dirt and you can rub it off with biodegradeable grit.

Uncommon Prayers:

(1) Special selection one-liners. (a) for bears: "If it's going to get me, Lord, please let me faint first." (b) for lightning: "I didn't do it, Lord, and anyway, I'm sorry." (c) all-

(continued on page 58)

Cabin Bar *continued*

and support this country. They will be involved in things I'm doing for the ranch, be a part of it. It becomes a great thing for me.

"All of us enjoy other people and find that you can get so much from knowing them, develop such close relationships. When you are walking behind cattle for twelve hours, and talking, you can get into someone's soul."

It was all right with me, too, I decided.

"It's every man's dream," declares Jon Clark, who is overseeing the development, "to own a business or become a cowboy. Can you imagine the opportunity for people who are seeking some refuge to get to real Americana — the romance of this being a true working cattle ranch, not a dude ranch? They will be able to go on a real cattle drive, one of the last opportunities. They can have roping and riding lessons, help and advice in buying, boarding and training horses, rub elbows with oldtimers and listen to the stories of this country first hand."

"These are things we can't take for granted. It is one of our heritages. When we get away from them, we fall apart as a country."

Buck Jr.: "These are things we can't take for granted. It is one of our heritages. When we get away from them, we fall apart as a country."

Target date for completion of the site is July 4th weekend. What could be more appropriate than to celebrate the emergence of this nation by offering an invitation to get back to the principles of strong family, strong community, strong country? The first home, which will belong to Richard S. Stevens, will be completed some time in the fall.

That's when the cattle will be coming back down from the high country, when the air will turn crisp and the shorter days will call for logs in the fireplace at night. Probably Indian Summer will last long enough to have a hot dog and marshmallow roast down by the lake under the big old cottonwood trees. •

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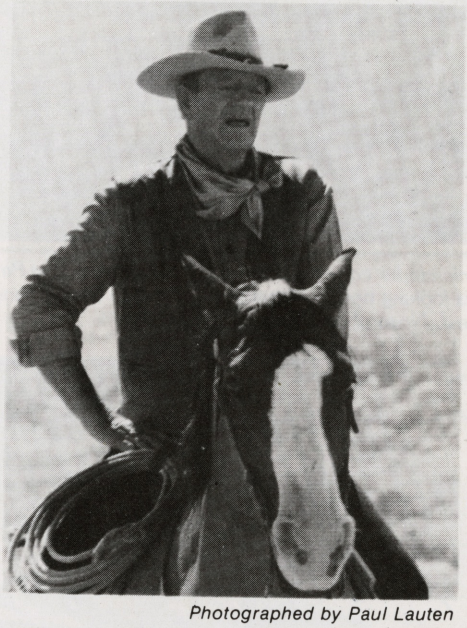

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Volcanoes and Hysteria

. . . a special report on volcanic activity in the Sierra.

Volcanic cinder cone off Fish Springs Road near Big Pine, CA. View is looking northwest with the Sierra in background. Valerie J. Naso photo.

Volcanic Cinder cone south of Big Pine, CA. View is looking south. Valerie J. Naso photo.

by Peter Joralemon

Volcanoes have always fascinated men and are probably the most dreaded natural event that has been experienced. This is odd, because earthquakes, which are taken as a matter of course in most parts of the world, have killed five times as many people as have volcanic eruptions. Still, the thought of being buried beneath hundreds of feet of hot volcanic ash below Mount Vesuvius or Mount St. Helens, or of being powdered by the blast of Krakatoa is not entirely pleasant, and perhaps a little worrying about natural catastrophies is good for the soul.

Volcanology has only recently emerged as a science rather than a fine art and most of our detailed knowledge has come since the eruption of Mount St. Helens. In less than two years, thousands of scientific readings have been taken in known volcanic areas in the United States, but scientists have not yet had the time to interpret these readings. The lack of such interpretation can lead people to sensational and erroneous conclusions, to believe the worst of our Earth.

Let's have a look at an example of the layman's interpretation of scientific observations. In August of 1981, the California Division of Mines and Geology published a scholarly article entitled "Volcanism in California" (California Geology, August 1981). In this, the volcanic areas of the State were described, as

Continued on next page . . .

"The use of such phrases as 'active volcanoes,' 'emergency services,' and 'volcanic hazard' seems to have created the conviction in the minds of some that we are headed for immediate extinction in a volcanic holocaust."

were the mechanics of volcanism and the tools used in volcanology.

This publication was followed in early December by a "Volcanic Hazards Workshop," sponsored by the State Division of Mines and Geology and the California Office of Emergency Services. The use of such phrases as "active volcanoes," "emergency services," and "volcanic hazard" seems to have created the conviction in the minds of some that we are headed for immediate extinction in a volcanic holocaust. Perhaps a review of the state of our knowledge of volcanoes can help to assuage this dread.

For convenience, volcanologists have divided volcanoes into three categories : "active volcano," "potentially active volcano," and "inactive volcano." An "active volcano" is one that is now erupting or that is known to have erupted within the past 2,000 years. A "potentially active volcano" is one of Quaternary age but whose last period of activity has not been pinned down to the last 2,000 years. An "inactive volcano" is known not to have been active for at least 2,000 years.

In California, some 500 volcanic vents are known to have erupted within the past two million years and, of these, 20 are classified as "active volcanoes." This does not mean that a new eruption can be expected momentarily, only that the last eruption came within the last 2,000 years and that the volcano cannot yet be considered extinct.

Since the fifteenth century, California has experienced an average of three volcanic eruptions per century, the most recent being a very minor one in 1890. These are concentrated in four general areas : Mount Lassen, Mount Shasta, Medicine Lake Highlands, and the Mono Basin - Long Valley caldera. Because of its proximity to the Sierra Nevada, we are here concerned primarily with the last area.

Mono Basin and Long Valley lie at the margin of the great Sierra Nevada frontal fault and the west edge of the Basin and Range Province. They are marked by a chain of twenty potentially active volcanic craters and domes where volcanologists have noted at least thirty eruptions in the past 2,000 years. Most of the domes and coulees (viscous lava flows with blocky steep frontal forms) in the area are of rhyolite obsidian, ash, and pumice. Long Valley itself is a thoroughly eroded explosive caldera. Geophysical studies suggest but do not prove, that the continental crust beneath this volcanic basin may be unusually thin. If indeed it is, the magma chamber, the molten source of volcanic material, may be assumed to be closer to the surface than elsewhere in California.

In the past several years, Mono Basin and Long Valley have been the site of a continuing earthquake swarm. Such activity might open conduits through which lava may rise from the magma chamber to the

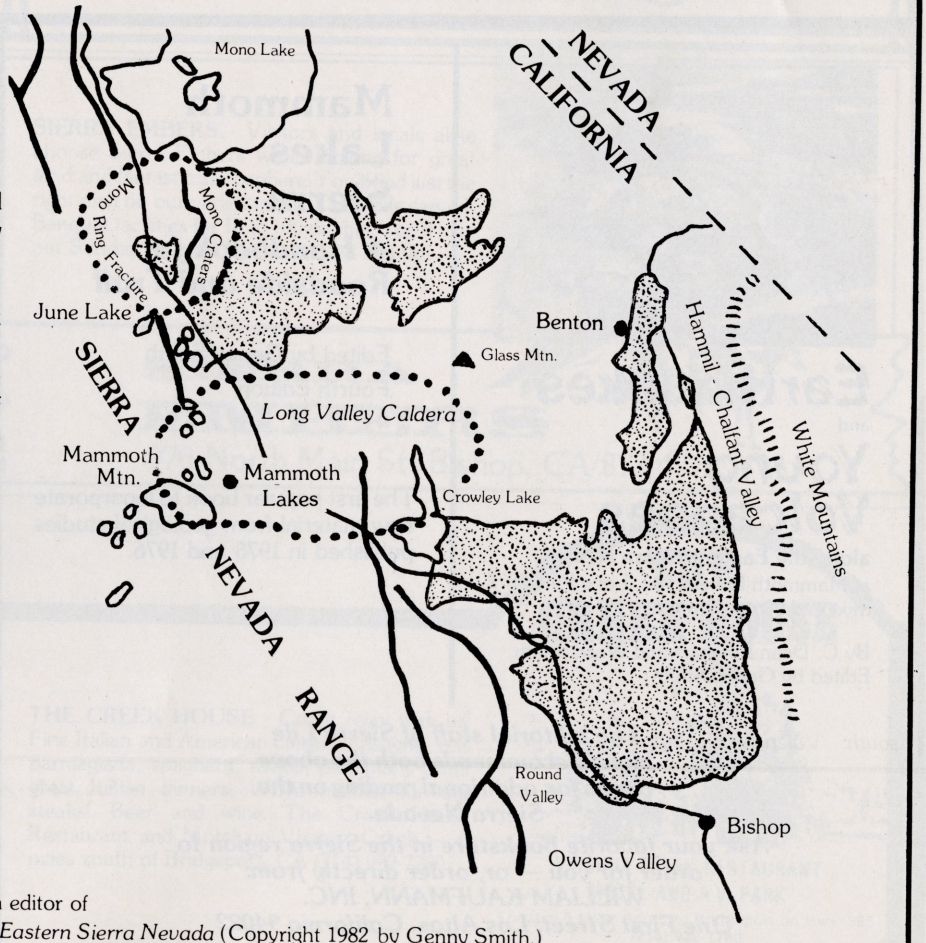
Continued on next page . . .

Locations of some young volcanic rocks, Long Valley Caldera and the Bishop Tuff

Map of the region between Bishop and Mono Lake, centered on the Long Valley caldera. Faults that define the eastern front of the Sierra, in heavy black. Bounding fault zone of the caldera in black dots.

Long Valley caldera is a huge depression from which the Bishop tuff (shaded area) blasted forth 700,000 years ago in a cataclysmic eruption about 200 times greater than Mount St. Helens eruption of May 18, 1980. Bishop tuff is the pinkish rock exposed in road cuts for many miles north of Bishop. As shown above, it covers about 450 square miles; drill cuttings and inclusions in younger volcanic rocks indicate a thick layer of Bishop tuff also may underlie the entire caldera at depth.

Mono ring fracture and the associated Mono Craters may represent early stages in the development of a future caldera.



Map and information courtesy of Genny Smith editor of *Earthquakes and Young Volcanoes along the Eastern Sierra Nevada* (Copyright 1982 by Genny Smith.)

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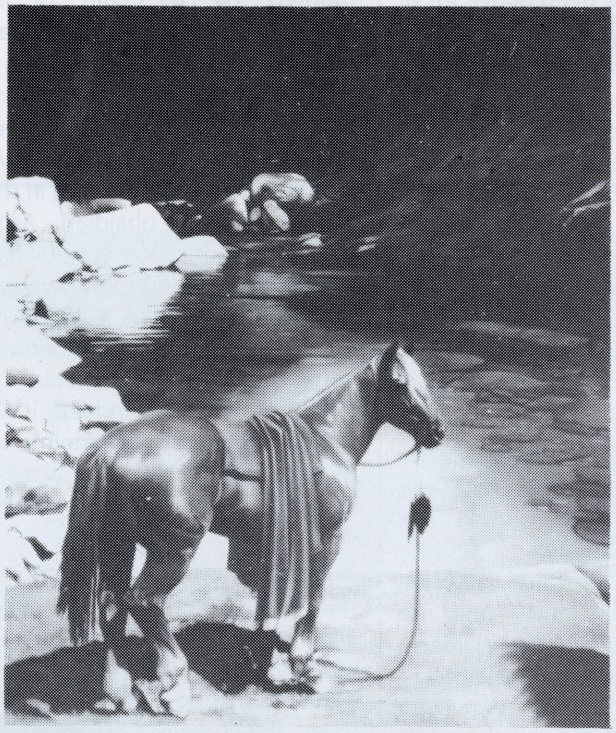

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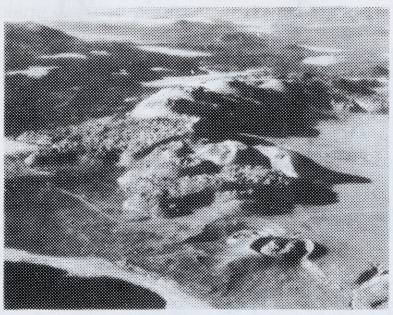

Earthquakes
and
Young Volcanoes
along the Eastern Sierra Nevada
at Mammoth Lakes 1980, Lone Pine 1872
Inyo and Mono Craters

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Volcanoes *continued*

surface. However, recent studies suggest that earthquake swarms preceding a volcanic eruption and indicating a movement of lava at depth will be harmonic type tremors.

The presence of "active volcanoes" in Mono Basin and Long Valley indicates only the relative youth of the volcanoes and in no way is indicative, by itself, of a future period of volcanic activity.

Eruptions have been studied with new tools and new theories in the last several decades. As instruments become increasingly sensitive, features are noted that had been previously missed with the more primitive instruments.

The tools include: gravity instruments to measure differing sub-surface specific gravities (perhaps to locate a pocket of molten rock contained in a denser solid rock shell); seismic instruments to detect and measure the intensity and location of earthquakes in volcanic areas; geodetic instruments to detect and measure slight bulging or shrinking of land forms in volcanic areas; and geothermometry to measure changes in temperature, composition, or rate of flow of hot springs.

Federal and State agencies have been monitoring known volcanic areas with these instruments but the bulk of the studies was started after the eruption of Mount St. Helens. An impressive collection of data has been obtained but no meaningful interpretation can be made on data collected over such a short period.

Among the volcanic processes we feel safe in accepting as factual are the following. A pocket of molten rock at depth cannot become a volcano unless and until a zone of weakness like a fault is formed to pipe the lava to the surface. Such zones of weakness may be formed by the shifting of the earth's surface and will be marked by earthquakes, either singly as along the Sierra Nevada frontal fault, or in swarms, as have been noted in recent Mammoth Lakes tremors. An approaching volcanic eruption will probably be accompanied by detectable bulges in the earth's

Continued on next page . . .

surface, and by abrupt changes in the temperature, composition and volume of flow of hot springs. In the last week or so before an eruption, seismic studies would be expected to show a rhythmic or harmonic series of earthquake tremors.

The "Volcanic Hazards Workshop" was useful in that it allowed scientists to compare observations and theories. New events have been noticed that appear to heighten the possibility of a new volcanic eruption in the Long Valley caldera near Mammoth Lakes. These include : continuing earthquake swarms from epicenters rising from a depth of two miles; the appearance of new hot springs within two miles of the earthquake epicenter; a doming of the center of the caldera which has raised the ground ten inches in the last three years.

Before we pack our bags and leave the area, we should consider some less disturbing aspects of this matter.

First, the warning issued by the United States Geological Survey on May 25 is the lowest of three levels of volcanic hazard warnings, and eruptions would not be expected until the two higher levels of alarm has been issued.

Second, while new hot springs have been noted, we must also remember that other springs, such as the geysers at Casa Diablo, have disappeared over the past thirty years.

Third, the volcanic history of the Long Valley caldera started with the most violent eruption 700,000 years ago, with the thirty eruptions in the last 2,000 years only of minor importance. Any future eruption is likely to resemble the action that poured out a thin layer of lava on Negit Island in Mono Lake in 1955.

Finally, the earthquake swarms are located generally south of the area of doming, suggesting that possible volcanic activity will be restricted to a small tongue leading upward and away from the main magma chamber.

Despite the excitement stirred up by the recent nationwide coverage of the volcanic warning, there doesn't seem to be any reason to expect any volcanic activity beyond a local curiosity for years to come.•

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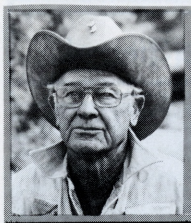

SIERRA SPORT TIPS

by Blake Jones

Seventeen years ago a small family of perch was noticed swimming around in Whiskey Bay at Crowley Lake. A California Department of Fish and Game biologist recognized them as Sacramento Perch, which created some excitement. Where had they come from? How did they get into Crowley Lake? Would they propagate? There was concern that if they propagated, the Eastern Sierra would lose a great "tackle-buster" lake.

Some fisherman must have felt he could catch some big trout by trolling with this attractive little perch, and some of the live ones got away, laid a few thousand eggs and the cycle started. There was some speculation that they were planted by the Fish and Game, but the Department disclaimed any responsibility.

Perch are now in Walker Lake, June Lake and some lakes in the central part of California.

We believe that so many perch feasting on the same food as the trout are causing the trout to be smaller. At the time of this release in June, 1982, three of us fished four hours and caught 42 perch ranging from one pound to two pounds, four ounces. Every time a perch gains a pound, it takes a pound off a trout, in my opinion.

In more than thirty years of experience on Crowley Lake, I have seen the trout drop from three to eight pounds, down to one or two pounds, due to insufficient food for both trout and perch.

Sacramento Perch are one of the easiest fish to catch that I know of, and one of the greatest fresh water fish you can eat.

My special way of preparing them is to fillet them, two nice fillets from each perch. Make a batter using Seven-Up or beer and flour. Drop the batter-dipped fish in hot oil for a few minutes until nice and brown. Salt and pepper to taste.

June and July are the best months to fish for the perch. Almost any kind of flashing lure with a worm on the end of the hook will do the trick. My favorite lures are green and yellow Roostertails, yellow Panther Martins, Bucktails for trolling. For still fishing, I use yellow and white leadheads, known as crappie jigs.

Try to fish around the moss in about 8 to 12 feet of water. No limit on Sacramento Perch — catch all you want.•

Linda and Robert standing at the Mexican border ready to take the first step on their long journey.

Hiking the PCT

Edited notes from the journal of Robert Elliott continued from our April issue of SIERRA LIFE.

Robert Elliott and Linda Hayward began their seven month hike of the Pacific Crest Trail in late May. SIERRA LIFE is keeping track of their progress through journals sent to us from various points during the trip. Following are the latest excerpts from their journal.

April 5, 1982

Linda and I are guests in a mobilehome in Anza. We are trying to get psyched for our assault on Mt. San Jacinto this morning. One week ago today we were standing at the Mexican border, feeling excited and saying to ourselves, "Are we really going to do this? Are we ready emotionally and physically?"

We are doing it. We have had about three days and four nights of rain and wind, but we are still on schedule. Linda didn't receive the maps she had ordered for the trail, so we have been using the trail guide. It is like trying to find a piece of string in a huge wheatfield. "Swing north, then west, around the knoll-top ranch house on either of two dirt roads, ignoring misleading CRHT (California Riding and Hiking Trail) posts, to find the northbound PCT on the dirt road lying on Durasna Valley's western margin." No problem. Clear as mud.

The trail has been good in some places, non-existent in others, completely overgrown in some places, and covered with snow in others. We have had some absolutely beautiful days and some wretched days. Most of the people we have met have been just wonderful, both other hikers and people who have bought us drinks, or just visited with us for awhile. We have found that some of our equipment works great, and some was a waste of money. Some of the highlights (and lowlights) of the trip have included speeding along the highway with a drunk driver in Anza, drowning in a driving rain storm in Chariot Canyon, surviving a windstorm on Apache Peak, thrashing through hip-deep snow on San Jacinto and San Gorgonio, and running into an old friend in Big Bear.

The first couple of days out, the main problem was exhaustion. We had found that last minute preparations were so time-consuming that sleep was impossible. The first day out, when we reached Kitchen Camp, our goal for that day, we went to bed at three in the afternoon and slept soundly until seven the following morning. It was beautiful to be able to sleep. The next night, at Mt. Laguna, we managed to prepare dinner before crashing at five-thirty in the afternoon. We were tired.

It rained on us the first two nights out and I came to appreciate Linda's tent. It is a Marmot Gore-Tex Taku tent and has already been worth its weight in gold. Linda had sealed the seams so there was no leakage. It is ventilated very well. There is no condensation inside and there is ample room for the two of us and our equipment.

On our third day out, we were unable to make the mileage we had intended, so we camped along the trail, on a ridge between Mt. Laguna and Chariot Canyon. It was a perfectly clear night, so we decided to sleep under the stars. By dawn, it was very windy, overcast and threatening, and we did a stupid thing. We packed up and took right off, neglecting to put

Continued on next page . . .

rain covers on our packs. After about a mile, we stopped by a creek to get water and became aware that our packs were already soaked. Although it was a case of closing the barn door after the cow was out, we put the covers on and trudged on through the rain and wind, both of which kept getting worse and worse. Trying to get down off the ridge into Chariot Canyon for protection from the driving rain, we became thoroughly soaked. Gore-tex may be good in laboratory conditions, but if a person

Linda crosses a muddy stream after a driving rainstorm. Stream crossing became quite dangerous as the trip progressed.

is carrying a pack along a mountain trail in a driving rainstorm, he is going to get wet. There is no fool-proof way to stay dry.

As we kept on walking through the storm, getting wetter and wetter, I began to be concerned about hypothermia. We kept munching on fruit and candy to provide ourselves with carbohydrates. Finally, we reached the floor of Chariot Canyon. By ten-thirty it was cold and I was happy to hear Linda say we had better put up the tent. I still felt she was the boss on this expedition and I was going to let her make most of the decisions.

Linda was already quite cold and unable to help, so I managed to get the tent up quickly and helped her out of her boots and inside. I was grateful we both had Polarguard sleeping bags, because even wet, they were warm when we clambered into them. After shedding the wet clothing, I warmed up immediately and was soon dozing off.

After about an hour and a half, I woke up, warm as toast, but became aware that Linda was still shivering and her teeth were chattering.

"Linda," I said, "I realize this will probably be as distasteful to you as it is to me, but we are going to have to open up the bags and snuggle so you can warm up." I hope that girl appreciates some of the sacrifices I've made for her on this trip.

We had to spend the rest of the day and night in the tent, but we were warm and dry, even while it continued to rain and blow hard outside. We concluded the main thing that pulled us through this crisis was embarrassment. It would have been just too embarrassing to have died from hypothermia on the edge of the Anza-Borrego Desert. There is no way I could have lived with myself.

By morning, the storm had broken up. As soon as the sun came up over the hill, we had our clothes out to dry on bushes. After breakfast and breaking camp, we put on some semi-dry clothes and hung the rest on the outside of our packs to dry during the course of the day.

We began our descent of Chariot Canyon where the road followed the creek, and made three fords within the first half-mile. The first and second ford went smoothly, as some strategically placed rocks made the crossings easy. Unfortunately, the third crossing had no stepping stones. A few hundred feet downstream, I found a place that involved a couple of big steps and was able to get across with no problem. I turned to help Linda.

"Just step over to that rock with your left foot, and then take a big step to this rock with your right foot and keep your momentum going forward and step right on the bank with your left foot. It's not as hard as it looks. The rocks aren't slippery at all."

"I don't know. That doesn't look good to me," she declared. "I'm going to find a better place."

So down the stream we went another hundred feet, Linda on one side, me on the other, until we came to a fallen tree that met with Linda's approval. She assessed the situation, figured out exactly what she was going to do, took one step out on the log,

Robert crosses fast-moving stream high in the Sierra. Ropes were the only means of crossing most streams due to heavy run off from snow.

and fell right into three feet of water. Soon her pack was completely covered with drying clothes. As I walked along behind her, I could see nothing of a pack, only what looked to be a huge pile of laundry with legs.

On Saturday, April 3, we made it to the town of Warner Springs, a hot springs resort community. We were disappointed to find the market and store had closed down. The nearest

Continued on next page . . .

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store, we were told, was in the town of Sunshine Summit, nine miles away, so Linda hitchhiked to the store. In the meantime, I learned that the entire resort of Warner Springs had been taken over by an encounter group and was closed to the public.

The next day was a long, hard one. We hiked twenty-three miles that Sunday, but finally reached the town of Anza, our scheduled stop for that night, about seven-thirty in the evening. We were tired and wanted to eat in a restaurant, if possible. Then, realizing how we looked, we were afraid they would refuse to serve us. But then we saw a beautiful sign: "The Outpost Pizza -- PCT Stop."

So, here we are, guests in a mobilehome in Anza, trying to get psyched for our assault on Mt. San Jacinto this morning.

June 6, 1982, back in Bishop again.

I arrived one week ago, and Linda arrived at five o'clock this morning.

There is a one-word explanation for our presence here, instead of Dan Beebe Campground halfway between Belden and Sierra City. SNOW. The late storm that hit us at Chariot Canyon dumped snow all through California, and that made it difficult to complete the entire Mexico to Canada walk in this one season.

We have hit so much snow in both southern and northern California that at least half of our journey has been made on highways instead of trails. In Southern California, we were forced down from Mt. San Jacinto, Mt. San Gorgonio, the San Bernardino Mountains and the San Gabriel Mountains. This meant we did more desert walking than we had anticipated, which wasn't bad, but it wasn't the Trail.

We reached Acton on April 24, completing our journey through the southern part of the State. Then to avoid the Sierra and their snowpack, we went to Ashland, Oregon and began hiking south through Northern California. Unfortunately, the snow level in the north was 4,500 feet, and the Trail was generally between 6,000 and 8,000 feet, resulting in our actually walking the PCT maybe three days total out of a month of walking in Northern California.

On May 9th, a Sunday morning in the Marble Mountains, after weeks of fording streams and trying to dry out, wading and camping in deep snow, we put on our crampons in anticipation of going through some steep icy slopes to get over Granite Pass. The snow was iced over and we were in very steep terrain. We had to pass through several avalanche chutes, and as we got up close to the ridge, we could see most of the length of it was corniced. I looked for a likely spot to cross, saw one I liked and began to climb.

Linda was not happy with the situation at all. "Robert, I don't like this! I don't have any confidence in these crampons! It looks like you are going up the steepest part! I still don't know how to self-arrest with this ice axe!"

"Hold it right there, Linda," I said. "You just stay there for a minute. You are NOT going to slip with those crampons on. I'm going on over the top here, look it over and find the easiest spot for you to come up, OK?"

She wasn't in much of a position to argue, but she let me know she was not too pleased. When I had climbed the ridge, I was glad she hadn't come that way. There was a huge crack in the snow about five feet back from the face that I had come over, and it ran for about fifty feet along the ridge there. Linda would freak out if she knew it was there. I looked around, saw a good place about a hundred feet farther on, and began talking her up and over.

She followed me back along the ridge to where I had set my pack. It was then that she looked back at where she had been and saw what I had come over.

"Oh migod! Is that where you came up? It looks like that thing could go any time!"

"Yeah, I know. But I figured it probably wouldn't have done you much good if I had screamed 'Holy ****! This whole cornice is going to avalanche any second!'"

This major alternate trail we took through the Marble Mountains wound up being just as snowbound as the PCT, and what was supposed to take five days to walk, actually took us nine days. We had only six days' food, and

(continued on next page)

found ourselves hiking for the final two and a half days with nothing to eat. On a Friday morning, after more ridge climbing and bushwacking, we made our way down to the highway. We were cut to shreds and very weak, but we were out.

As a result of that experience, we decided to stick to the highways. There are three major problems with hiking the highways. One, it is boring and a person might as well be in a car, for all the pretty scenery we were missing. Two, walking on asphalt with a seventy pound pack destroys the feet. And three, we were passing restaurants and stores all along the way. This meant we were spending our money faster than anticipated, because we had absolutely no will power when it came to food. It is impossible to keep weight on while hiking the Trail, so we had both lost a lot of weight during the two months, and we were eating like pigs.

One afternoon we came out of the Siskiyou Mountains and down to the Klamath River. We stopped at a little restaurant in the town of Klamath River at three in the afternoon, and when they closed, six hours later, Linda and I had eaten three meals apiece.

To top it all off, we both got into some poison oak, which is impossible to treat while walking 17 miles a day. We were sweating, causing it to spread much faster. We were unable to take showers to relieve the itching, we were unable to wash our clothes to get out the oil, and worst of all, it got into our sleeping bags. It was miserable.

So, Linda and I decided to take a break. I am going to work some odd jobs around town, and she will work as a Forest Service volunteer for three weeks as a river patrol person on the Klamath River. And then on July 9th, we are going to start again at Ashland, Oregon, and attempt to walk through Oregon and Washington, as planned. We have now decided that when we finish our original schedule, we will come back to Mammoth and start hiking north, to walk as much of Northern California as we can before next winter's snow will finally drive us out of the mountains. And that's where we are now.•

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Diary *continued*

purpose: "Dear God, if you get me out of this mess, I promise I'll never let this man take me into your mountains again." Sometimes a little negotiation or mitigation like that helps.

(2) The unlisted spontaneous prayer: I blurt it out when, after extreme prudence, bordering on cowardice, on the trail, I manage to make camp unbruised, unscraped and unbunged, forget I am a goat and not a gazelle and trip over the tent stake to come up bruised, scraped and bunged. This one is usually met with distant thunder.

(3) A negotiating prayer: We round a corner and come upon a six-inch wide trail gouged into a solid granite wall above a 2,000 foot drop, more or less. Hand against mouth, tears running down face, hyperventilating in high gear: "Please God, get me across that and I promise not to throw up, scream, or pollute your lovely wilderness with my presence ever again." Even in abject terror, I try not to be inarticulate in the face of fate.

(4) Given my unerring lack of balance, you can be sure I use the above prayer in many circumstances. For instance, when I find myself sliding the wrong way down a snow bank in those splendid regions of crashing, plunging water, flint-edged boulders, barbarous red and black cliffs, bleak glaciers, and bottomless black, ice-fringed lakes nestled in their refrigerated granite basins.

(5) Perhaps my last prayer is not so uncommon. When the aspen whisper, the steam rises from a cup of sweet herb tea, and we are lying in the sun fishing a high lake, it's a simple "Thank you, God." And that goes double for home and a hot bath.

The velvet flesh, soft breeze and precious rose:
ghosts in the thin silver suns of the summit;
my soul, impaled in the foxtail pine,
no longer singing. My songs
are the fog on the breath of the wild coyote,
the wind of the wild geese winging.
The saxifrage, the goldenrod, the sage
green aspen tree
are bitter bones and sharp,
a harp
that splinters fragile air.

It well may be
that poetry's
the last remains of love.

EVENING SONG from Songs of a Country Woman.

Gus Cashbaugh *continued*

Association, Inyo County Cattlemen's Association, the Masonic Lodge and the Catholic Church. He has served on boards and advisory boards for the Northern Inyo Cemetery District, the Bank of America, the Bishop High School, the Inyo Creamery, and is a patron member of the Bishop Museum and Historical Society. He has voted in every presidential election but one, since Teddy Roosevelt.

A cattleman's life and a community leader's life keeps a man pretty busy, but it is not without romance. Gus met his wife, Ruth, in 1915 and they were married for 58 years before she died. They had three children, ten grandchildren and the line goes on, but he still smiles when he recalls Ruth's dimples.

"See those dimples," he told a reporter. "She always had those dimples. I met my wife when I was 32. And from the moment I met her I was stuck with her from then on. We got married in Reno and then went to the World's Fair in San Francisco for our honeymoon." He has dedicated to her memory many of his contributions to the Laws Railroad Museum.

Gus and his wife have written many stories about local life. Gus denies being a writer. He never wastes words, even in speech, but has recorded in his orderly, straightforward fashion the daily life and detail of an era of change.

"Bishop was a different town back then. It wasn't too large. It was mostly farm people. There weren't any of these tourists. They didn't know where the place was."

"The Town of Bishop Creek was formed in 1861. In 1889 it was changed to Bishop." He tells of his memories of buildings long gone, blacksmith shops and old hotels, white picket fences and flower gardens on Main Street, the founding in 1903 of the Women's Improvement Club, where the voting precincts were, the jail and the livery stable, saloons and the hog pen on Warren Street next to the school, the ice plant and Jasper Williams' sarsaparilla bottling works.

"In the early days the streets were dirt, dusty when dry and windy, boggy after heavy rains. I have seen five feet of snow on Main Street, also boats rowing down Main. When the streets got too boggy sand would be hauled in on wagons to fill up the holes."

He has written journals and contributed pictures and short summaries on the cattle drives, the old Sunland District, the "Story of Owens River Valley Electric Railway Company, a line from Bishop to Laws, California, known locally as the 'Red Apple Route.'"

There are recollections and photos of Joe Ward, "The Man and the Desert, whose magic life would scare the devil out of hades or make him run for cover," and Louis Leidy, who was at Lone Mountain, about 15 miles from Tonopah, when Jim Butler found the great Mizpah silver vein. There are lists of names and locations of pioneer families, pictures and information on "Bishop Post Office — 100 Years," churches, and Indian stories.

In newspaper clippings, photos and on typed sheets, Gus tells the story of the Standard Flour Mill, an early Cashbaugh project, the Cashbaugh Brothers' brands, and recollections of seasons on the Cashbaugh Ranch. There is a section on the well-known Judge Dehy, whose family was related to the Cashbaughs. There is a map of the original City of Bishop and all its little additions, the history of why Bishop has free water to this very day, maps of old canals, mines, cattle trails, mills, ranger stations, early schools and school districts, and bridges. There are photos of student groups from Bishop schools dating back to 1891.

He has written notebooks full of data on Owens Valley bees, early settlers, miners and cattle ranchers, local dairies, "Weather Stories - Snow, Wind, Rain and Ice," "A Short Synopsis on Slaughter Houses," schools, professional people and organizations.

In one paper, Gus takes a walk up and down Main Street of Bishop and tells what church, store, hotel, livery stable, bank, or professional office stood on the site of the current building, who built it or owned it, why

(continued on next page)

Gus Cashbaugh *continued*

they sold, and a bit of history about their families.

"We had our hitching posts on Warren Street. There were horses back in those days, you know, or else you had to go on foot."

A delightful piece of memorabilia in the photo display at Laws Museum is this piece of sheet music entitled: *SONG, GOOD BYE CHARLEY, DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF A DREAM and MY SIX LITTLE SWEETHEARTS, ALMA MURRAY, CRISSIE TAL, GERTIE and ETHEL CHRISTIAN and the Misses THELMA and ISABEL TEAR of Bishop, California, By the Right Honorable the Reverent Joe Ward (Alias A. Mutt, O.I.C.), Commander of the Bishop Army and Associated Volunteers, as sung by BURRO BILL and JACKASS JOHNNY, Ably Assisted by THE BISHOP QUARTETTE — the Big 4, And the Drowning Harmonies of the Inyo Band of 1500 Performers.*

In one journal, Gus reminisces about holidays in the long ago, Christmas, Decoration Day, and an Independence Day celebration in 1899:

"At 5 a.m., thirteen shots of gun powder was set off that awoke all the people! That was the big day for our family as we would all go to town. My mother would prepare a picnic lunch. About nine o'clock we would all ride in the spring wagon, stopping at about 200 Third Street, where there was a small stream of water and several black willow trees.

"At 10 a.m. the literary exercises would start: on this Fourth of July, there were about 1200 people, the largest crowd ever to assemble." He tells of the band, the reading of the Declaration of Independence, the orations and songs, picnics, athletic contests and races. "The Bicycle Cavalry Drill ... with 16 boys and girls all dressed up and the bicycles decorated ..." and in the evening was the Grand Ball, so large it took two halls to accommodate the crowd. Supper at the Clark Hotel was 50¢ a plate.

Gus hasn't been interviewed yet about his secret for longevity, but he has given us some good hints. He is relaxed, humorous and interested. He likes to recall and record, but he looks forward to the future. Up here in Inyo County, almost 10% of the voters are in the "75 and over" bracket, so he doesn't think he is so unusual. Maybe it has something to do with that outdoor life and that vegetable garden. Anyway, Gus is "down south" having a good time right now so we couldn't ask him, but he has said he wouldn't want to go back in time, because he hasn't finished yet. •

"...About nine o'clock we would all ride in the spring wagon, stopping at about 200 Third Street, where there was a small stream of water and several black willow trees."

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Swiss Alps Sierra Style

Photos and text by John Stow

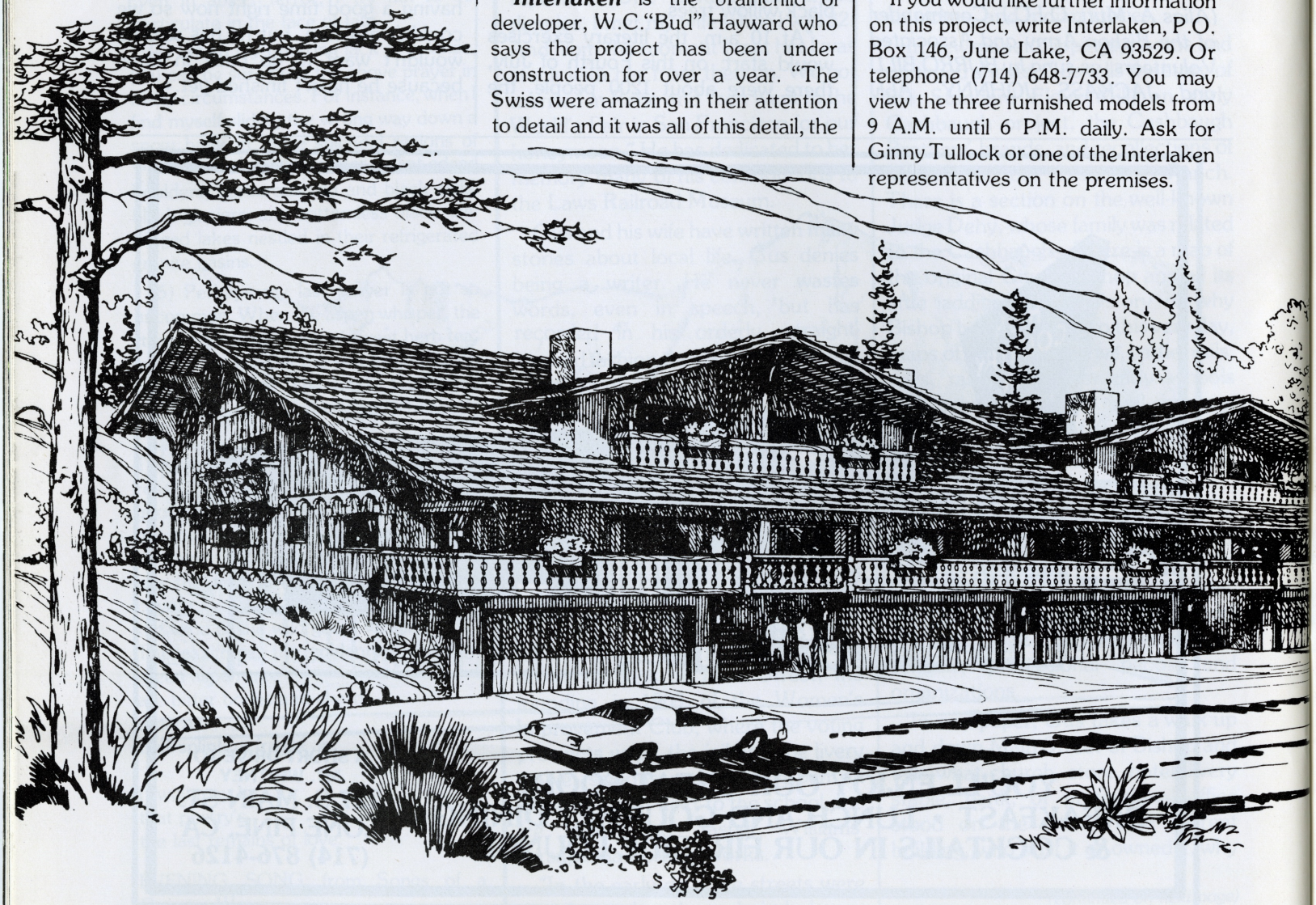
Many a visitor to the June Lake area has exclaimed with awe how nearly the beauty of this pristine lake studded alpine valley resembles the Swiss Alps. It is breathtakingly beautiful no matter what the season may be.

In keeping with this Alpine setting, something new has recently been added to the June Lake area — a condominium development that looks as if it had been lifted and transported out of Switzerland complete to the last detail. This development, **Interlaken**

The development is named ***Interlaken*** in keeping with the Swiss theme. The project overlooks Gull Lake and each of the 38 units has a commanding view of the majestic Sierra beyond — June Mountain, San Juaquin and Carson Peaks.

Interlaken is the brainchild of developer, W.C."Bud" Hayward who says the project has been under construction for over a year. "The Swiss were amazing in their attention to detail and it was all of this detail, the huge hand crafted corbels, intricately shaped porch rails and thousands of scalloped trim that took the time. I must say that it turned out well and I am proud of it," he added. And proud he should be — ***Interlaken*** is a unique bit of old world charm in a gorgeous setting. Located between June Lake and Gull Lake, ***Interlaken*** is easily reached less than a half-mile off Highway 158.

If you would like further information on this project, write Interlaken, P.O. Box 146, June Lake, CA 93529. Or telephone (714) 648-7733. You may view the three furnished models from 9 A.M. until 6 P.M. daily. Ask for Ginny Tullock or one of the Interlaken representatives on the premises.



Three models are open for viewing at Interlaken in June Lake. Interiors by Lois Interiors of Santa Ana, California.

The project consists of thirty-eight units. All units have a breathtaking view of the Sierra and are just a quarter mile from June Mountain.

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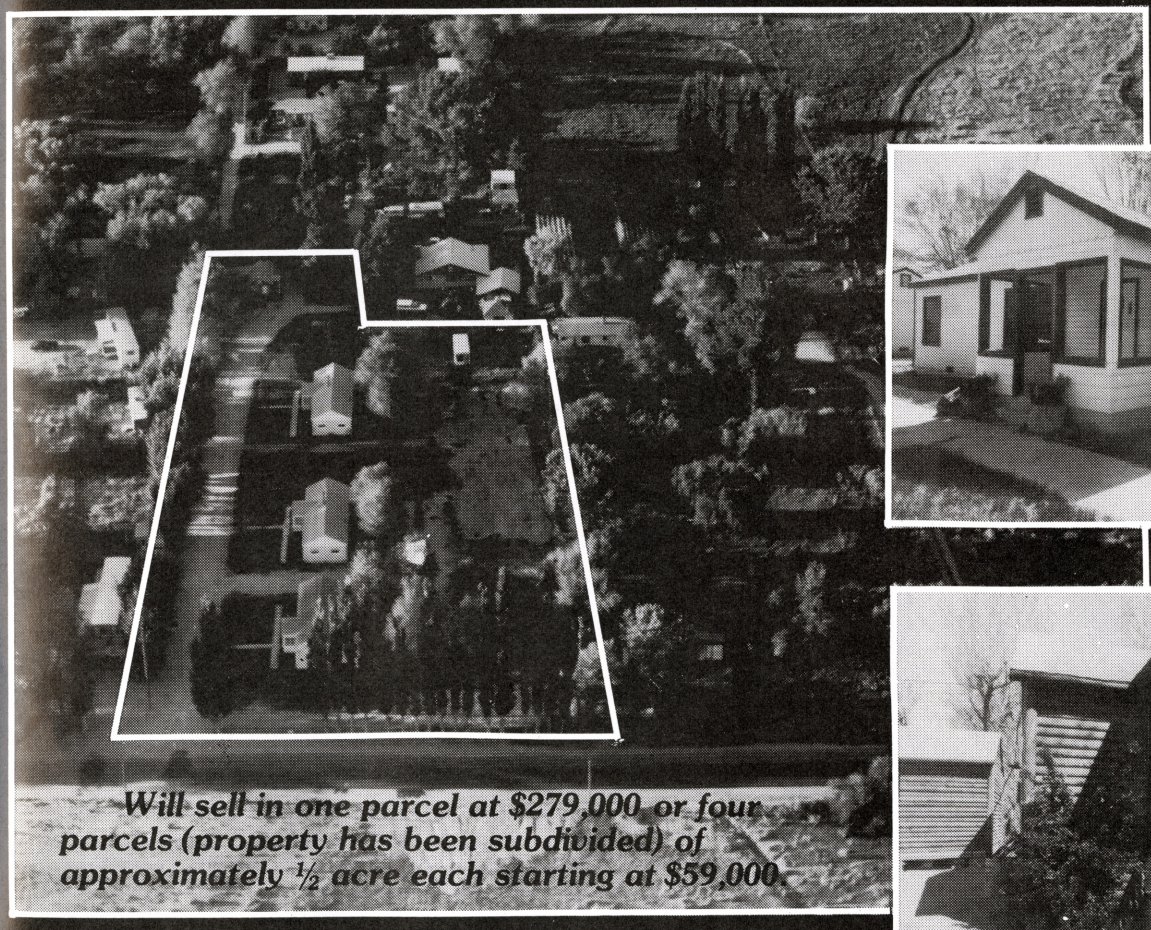

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